The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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A GREAT SERVANT OF THE CHURCH

THERE is perhaps no greater and more practical proof of the power of Christian faith to transform human sorrow and pain and loss into consolation and peace and gain than is afforded by the death of a priest. Every such minister of the sacred mysteries has in his time anointed others who were passing from life to death, and has offered up the sacrament of the altar for their souls, and has done all that was possible to comfort the stricken hearts of their relatives and friends. Over and over again, has he been accustomed to offer up those prayers which are not his alone but are surcharged with all the virtue of the liturgy of the everlasting Church of Christ. "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. The just shall be in everlasting remembrance. . . ." "For unto thy faithful, O Lord, life is changed, not taken away: and the abode of this earthly sojourn being dissolved, our eternal dwelling is prepared in heaven. . . ." Then he in his turn receives the holy anointing, and over the frail abode of his earthly sojourn the same prayers ascend. So it is now with Father John Burke.

We write these feeble words on the feast of All Souls, when throughout Christendom the heart and mind and soul of the universal Church are concentrated on the great mysteries of life-in-death, and while the body of this priest is being borne from the field of his labor in Washington to the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, in New York, the church of his congregation, of which he was so great a servant. It was only in the last months of his life that he wore the purple of a prelate. Greatly as he had deserved the high honor which came to him, it was as Father Burke that he won it, and it is as Father Burke that his memory will live. And while the human sorrow and pain and loss that his family, and his friends, and his fellow workers, so keenly feel, must still

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continue, nevertheless, it is consolation and peace and great gain for them to realize not only how successful was his career—in the highest sense—but also how permanently that career has enriched Christian life in the country he loved so well

The end of the World War brought Father Burke his supreme opportunity to serve the interests of his Church and country—the great object of his life. What Archbishop Dowling and many others had been demanding — a Catholic life released from bondage to the merely parochial—seemed easy of realization now, and the National Catholic Welfare Conference sponsored a program of betterment that extended to social conditions, the press, education and rural life. The historian of the future will doubtless call this a moment of awakening and resurgent optimism. Though grave problems and difficulties appeared almost immediately, the momentum of the first impulse was never lost. Father Burke—the real originator of the N.C.W.C., and its guiding genius, as the trusted executive of episcopal authority —had his full share of dark days. He was in particular the victim of the blow delivered by Mexico. His tactfulness in this and other trying situations will merit grateful remembrance.

We believe that the name of Monsignor Burke will be recorded in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States high among the very greatest leaders of Catholic Action—on the same level of creative influence where stand such figures as Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Hughes and Bishop England. Moreover, his work will be remembered as part of the substance of American history in its more important period because of the beneficent contribution which, largely through Monsignor Burke's leadership, the united forces of American Catholicism gave to the nation. How great a part he played in the unification of the mighty agencies both of the clergy and of the laity, which produced first the National Catholic War Council and which became permanent in the National Catholic Welfare Conference, will be revealed by the future historians of the Church in the United States. He was a religious genius of the first order. His capacity for practically carrying out the lines of a great vision was extraordinary. All his many activities were nourished from a single source, namely, his intense interior life of unity with Christ. The American Catholic laity owe a special debt of gratitude because of his recognition of the part played by the laity in the work of the Church and for the way in which he both inspired and directed that activity. It can truly be said of Monsignor Burke that his work will live after him and keep his memory green.

His career was a wonderful illustration of the harmony that exists in the Catholic Church between and among many seemingly divergent forces—what, indeed, might be antagonistic forces were it not for the manner in which the unifying power of the central motive of the Church, the working of all things together for the glory of God, enables such forces to achieve balance in cooperation. As we have already stated, until almost the end of his life Monsignor Burke was a simple priest. As such, he was strictly "a man under authority," subject to the jurisdiction of the superiors of his congregation, and of the bishops whom for so many years he served as general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. As Bishop Boyle remarks, in his tribute to the dead priest—one among many testimonials from the leaders of the Church, the Holy Father at their head—his "loyalty to the bishops and the just and scrupulous care which he gave to their affairs" was one of his chief characteristics. Yet, because of the marvelous spiritual democracy of the Catholic Church, this simple priest took rank among the princes and highly commissioned leaders of the army of Christ as one who led as well as followed, as a great initiator.

As Bishop O'Hara says, "his peculiar and permanent contribution to the service of the Church arose from his capacity to view the work of the Church as a whole." By nature, he was a man of extraordinary originality; a conceiver of individual plans; a pioneer and a path-breaker. Such men are sometimes (but most mistakenly) considered to be at a disadvantage in so highly organized an institution as the Catholic Church. It is thought that their originality and personal force must necessarily be blunted or muffled by authoritarian forces. But Father Burke, like many other servants of the Church before him, completely falsified this superficial judgment. He proved, once more, how the humblest priest (or the humblest layman, for that matter) may deeply influence the work of the Church through personal qualities, personal gifts, and find the widest scope for the exercise of his talents, provided such a priest (or layman) had what Bishop O'Hara saw was possessed by Father Burke. "Difficult problems concerning every phase of Catholic thought and action engaged his attention, but he was not confused by the multiplicity of seeming conflict, for he had a deep understanding of the relations of the members of the Mystic Body to Christ, the Head. His loyalty to Christ's visible representative, the Pope, and to the Bishops, was based on such serene and profound faith that his work was always carried on the lofty plane of religious consecration."

That was the secret. He was a great churchman, a great patriot, a great lover and servant of humanity, whether inside or outside the visible limits of the Church, because of the ever-present energy of his priesthood. The Church well knows her own, and his work was the work of the Church because in nothing did John Burke seek only his own: he was the servant of Christ.

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Week by Week

GOVERNOR LANDON'S telegram to President Roosevelt on November 3 lucidly (and generously) expressed the energizing central truth of the presidential election: "The nation has spoken. Every American will accept the verdict, and work for the common good of our country. That is the spirit of democracy." The tremendous extent of the victory won by President Roosevelt and his party is not the most notable fact, extraordinary as it was. The most notable fact, in our judgment, was the circumstance that the vast number of citizens who placed the seal of their approval upon President Roosevelt's administration, and expressed their will for its continuance, was so truly representative of all sections of the country. All its varied interests, all its classes and divisions, socially and culturally considered, were among the Roosevelt supporters. Those who opposed him were of three main divisions. First, the really dangerous radicals, and, second, the extreme reactionaries, together with a third group of citizens who were neither radical nor reactionary, but were convinced that the New Deal was perilous to the nation's social and political system. But this last group was balanced by a group very similarly constituted of business men, farmers, publicists, educators and clergymen, men and women both, who believed that the Roosevelt way was a safe way of salutary reform, preservative of the American system.

The Nation Speaks

IT WAS this latter group that gave light and leading to the Democratic party's campaign. Of course, President Roosevelt himself was his own best champion, upon him devolved the chief task of leadership, and of course his efforts, and those of his supporters, were backed up by amazingly efficient political machines, both in the national and the local campaigns. Nevertheless, the victory won was far from being the uniquely personal matter that many publicists judged it to be. It is now clear that the greater number of the liberal Republicans who crossed party lines in 1932 remained with their new allegiance. How effective their work was could be seen in the case of New Hampshire, where former Governor Winant's influence in combating the attack upon the Security Act was so decisive. And it is this type of support which encourages hope that the great danger brought about in a party-system government by too great weight on one side of the party line may be corrected. As we have said many times, no victory at the polls definitely settles our tremendous social and political problems. The crisis is still with us, still calls for the highest and most disinterested cooperation of all Americans.

Another Word about Europe

WHO IS arming the rival Spanish forces? Despite the international neutrality pact, equipment and munitions for both sides have been pouring into the war-torn country. The past week saw the arrival of shipments destined for the government armies, and it has been supposed that Russia furnished them. Our guess is that they came from elsewhere, and our reasoning is primarily this: during the week, the Spanish war entered major European politics directly when Chancellor Hitler and Count Ciano reached their now famous "agreement." Those conversations did not mean that Mussolini was establishing a military alliance. Such a thing will not exist until Mussolini has lost his mind (which seems quite unlikely) or until the European scene has radically changed. They mean rather that Italy promises not to become a partner to treaties strengthening the Franco-Russian pact while Germany abets her ambition to give power to a Spanish Fascist associate in the Mediterranean. And the ultimate result of it all is to strengthen Italy diplomatically in its struggle with Great Britain. Mussolini wants first of all recognition of his Ethiopian empire, including of course the sanction of British credits. Then he desires a new agreement concerning naval power in the *Mare Nostrum*. It has long been apparent that the English are far from disposed to concur. Many of their statesmen still term Mussolini, not Hitler, "enemy number one." For various reasons they may prefer to gain as much time as possible for rearmament. Since one way to get that time is to hamper Rightist victory in Spain, we suggest that the supplies which have reached Madrid could possibly have been shipped from a land less remote than Soviet Russia. At any rate, statesmen recently added not a few to the intrigues which are pushing Europe toward a showdown.

Kicking Your Friends

ONE OF the few somewhat unusual aspects of recent political operations was the attitude candidates took toward their supporters, and the attitude the public took toward the candidates' supporters. Hearst, Gerald K. Smith, James M. Warburg, David Dubinsky and many more all caused sizable eddies simply by coming out for someone. The raking which many regular New Dealers gave Mr. Warburg when he plumbed on their side seemed very unenlightened and moderately vicious. How can you have peace if you insist on welcoming new friends with a swift kick? Mr. Dubinsky's case was that of all Americans who, more or less true to the main lines of Marxist criticism, still decided to support the President. Apparently a lot of Americans think it a disgrace to shake hands with such persons. The basic question is, of course, a question of

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everybody's motives. Although the President gave almost rabidly capitalistic speeches repudiating Marxism, etc., a large part of capitalism refused to believe him. To convince that group Mr. Roosevelt acted rather ungallantly toward many supporters. One feels he could have embraced the friendship of the radicals and boasted of their support and still have remained a sincere democrat and believer in private property, the home and religion. Would it be a disgrace to work out a non-revolutionary line of betterment that would persuade revolutionaries to decide against revolution? Would it be a shame to act so justly toward Have-nots that they would not fear a beating and suppression by what is supposed to be their government as well as anyone's? Would it betray America if an administration raised the hopes of citizens now so violently opposed to the status quo that they are willing to kill and be killed to change it, to a point where it gained their support in bloodless reform?

Science and Religion

THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES recently reformed by the Holy Father fulfils one of his most cherished ambitions. It is Catholic teaching that there can be no "conflict" between true learning and religion, since both have for their goal the quest of truth. Pope Pius, himself a scholar, has been a particular friend of this belief. The new Academy includes Catholic and non-Catholic savants who have found the study of nature a road toward God rather than away from him. Laymen cannot but be impressed by their testimony in favor of what is ironically dubbed "metaphysics." Of course seventy names cannot take in all the illustrious investigators for whom science and faith are compatible. That so many Italians were included is doubtless a consequence of certain recent positivistic tendencies in the education of Italy. It was wise to suggest at this time that issues over which the past century made so much disturbance have long since ceased to matter. Let us hope that the emphasis now placed upon compatibility will bear at least as much fruit as the "disparity" which it was fashionable to insist upon thirty years ago yielded of scepticism and unsettlement.

A Turn for the Better

VIGOROUS Catholic educational effort is being reported from nearly all parts of the country. Interest in lectures is greater, not merely because people have more money to spend but also because there is more eagerness to share in the exchange of Catholic views. Many cities can now point to sizable and alert audiences, ranging from 800 to 2,000 persons; but one is particularly struck by what is being accomplished in small communities. Alumni and teacher organizations are thriving, and not merely on paper. Small bands of similar-minded individuals are learning to know the values and the delights of coming together. It strikes us that these Catholics are not nearly as passive as many of their precursors. They do not, of course, engage in fierce debates about religious teachings. But on subjects of current or cultural interest, they generally have opinions which they will change only when persuaded or convinced that it would be wise to do so. Very much can be done with this solid and substantial enthusiasm. We are optimistic enough to think that much will be done. The American parish priest of today is eager to share in the efforts of a vigorous and vocal laity. Probably never before in any country during hundreds of years has there been greater readiness to cooperate. It may be that this "revival"—if one wishes to use such a dubious term—is a fruit of perils already present and an anticipation of others to come. But in union there is sufficient strength.

Very Current Events

IT IS long since we found ourselves so much appealed to on the score of practical imagination as we are appealed to by the Election Day program of the Current Events department of the Woman's Club of Chatham, New York. These ladies exhibit a sense of values and proportions in their chosen field which should be a permanent example, a kind of classic precedent, to civically aspiring organizations. For they did not merely urge women voters to get out and do their duty at the polls. They made it possible for them to do so, by foreseeing and meeting the difficulties which so often bar Votes for Women. Not only did they assemble a volunteer motor corps, which gave free transportation to any incapacitated (or even any merely sedentarily inclined) voter, of either sex. Concentrating on the problems of their own sex, they also volunteered for home service—cradle-rocking, dinner-watching, and all such-like emergency activities—to enable housekeeper-voters to get away. This is what we have called showing a due sense of proportion. A vote is certainly the proper province of a Current Eventer; and so, emphatically, is a baby—not to say a roast or an apple pie. The importance of timing the pie and the baby's bottle to a certain minute is just as real as the importance of timing the vote to a certain day, and the club members deserve praise for dealing practically with the discovery. It may seem an obvious one—but so does every successful achievement, like Lindbergh's flying the Atlantic. We suspect that these ladies have inaugurated a new era. Incidentally, we also commend their warning to temporarily liberated ladies to utilize the period of liberation for civic duties, and not for shopping.

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THE MAJOR SUPERSTITIONS

By JOHN K. RYAN

BECAUSE we are intelligent beings we are all philosophers. We are not satisfied with discerning effects and gathering facts: we try to interpret the facts and to explain the effects. To do this is to philosophize: to make an attempt to assign to effects their proper causes. But because we are not perfect beings we do not always succeed in our attempt to assign their correct and complete causes to the phenomena that puzzle us. Sometimes we think to explain a given effect by asserting that it is the result of a cause by nature insufficient to produce that effect. This is the essence of all fallacy and it is an essential element in most superstitions.

In the case of primitive or naive people it is not difficult to detect their superstitions. Who can discover how falling cards or crystal balls are causes adequate to produce the tremendous effect of revealing events that lie in the future? What is the power of charms and amulets to ward off dangers? Where is the secret force in the books of Vergil such that they reveal our fate when opened at random? What is the gift of the gypsy woman, the clairvoyant and the soothsayer that enables them to make prophecies, discover lost and hidden things, search out secrets and solve mysteries? These things are seen to be means completely inadequate to produce the effects that are sought, and trust in their efficacy is clearly against reason. But these may be called minor superstitions in comparison and contrast to others that have become prevalent in these latter years.

The major superstitions of the modern world are not found among the primitive and naive except in so far as they are affected by the ideas and practises of those who dominate them. Formally and efficaciously, the major superstitions of our world are found in the minds and works of philosophers and students of philosophy, among original thinkers and their adherents. The major superstitions of our day are the errors of theory and the evils of practise that must be charged against men who are engaged in the philosophical task, who are trying to explain things, to assign to phenomena their proper causes, to provide other men with a rational calculus of values and sound criteria of conduct. Nor must it be thought, when certain metaphysical and ethical systems are charged with being major superstitions, that the men who produced those systems are men of mean and weak intellect. Their errors are all the more serious precisely because they are able thinkers.

Today the monistic philosophy exerts more influence than at any time in the history of our race. It asserts that all reality must be interpreted in unitary terms. Reality is God, or change, or mind, or matter, or some neutral substance neither mind nor matter but becoming either or both: this is the monistic assertion in its various expressions. Upon this basic assertion that reality is all of one piece great thinkers have raised grandiose schemes of thought. Monism in its several forms of pantheism, idealism, materialism and fierism stands so imposingly in the realm of ideas that it seems almost temerarious to call it a superstition. Yet for the authority of the thinkers who have produced the monistic doctrine, for the elaborate care with which they have worked out their complete systems, for the prestige that it possesses and the influence that it exerts, monism must be called *the* major superstition. It must be charged with being the greatest of all failures to assign to effects an adequate cause, the most persistent of all attempts to give credit to means that are by nature completely unable to produce the effects sought.

By its very nature every sort of monism must hold that the universe of our experience is a self-existent reality, a being that exists necessarily and by its own nature. Monism cannot admit the dualistic doctrine of a necessary, self-existent, infinite being, God, who transcends this world that we know and in which we dwell. Yet if we examine this world we find that no part of it exhibits an absolute necessity of nature. Every part of our world from the highest and greatest down to the lowest and least, from man down to the atom, shows itself to be of a dependent, contingent, relative, finite character. None of the individual parts of the universe is independent, self-existent, absolute, infinite. Yet by a magical arithmetic monism adds them up to make one single being that is self-existent, infinite and necessary.

In that arithmetic both fallacy and superstition are found. Fallacy is here because the monist does not see that the contingent and finite necessarily depends by its very nature upon a being that is genuinely independent and infinite. Fallacy is here because in refusing to admit the existence of one single transcendent necessary being, the sole sufficient cause of finite things, the monist must contradict the initial testimony of both reason and sense-experience and make every particular being necessary and self-existent. Superstition is here because in this doctrine is found the rejection of reason and a blind faith that by some magic the finite does produce the infinite, an unreasoning confidence that somehow a sum of imperfect means can produce a perfect whole.

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The same charge of superstition must be made against the monist who believes that everything in nature can be explained by recourse to some mystic formula such as the word "evolution." It has been thought that in some manner the order of the world is self-caused and self-explanatory. While intelligence is admittedly necessary for the minute and simple order that man institutes among his works, yet for the effect of the order of nature, universal, constant, intricate and subtle, no proportionate cause is required. We are presented with the spectacle, so well described by Professor Whitehead, of men moved by the purpose of establishing man's precise place in nature, and performing experiments with the purpose of proving that there is no purpose in nature.

William James was once reminded by some of the opponents of his pragmatism ". . . of those catholic writers who refute darwinism by telling us that higher species cannot come from lower species because *minus nequit gignit plus*." Whatever be the merits of the particular controversy to which James referred, the actual issue between reason and superstition could hardly be put in more succinct form. If it is established that order, purpose, development obtain in nature, then for these facts reason must seek and accept only a proportionate and adequate cause. If the evolutionary doctrine is to have any meaning and value, it must be in the light of that law of thought which states that the greater cannot come from the less. It is the part of superstition to trust that somehow the effect of orderly development is self-caused and self-explained, as the monist must hold. The sole genuinely rational explanation will be that of a mind prior to and superior to an order that must be admitted and for which a sufficient cause must be assigned.

Not only is the materialistic monist guilty of superstitution in his attack on purpose and in his unreasonable rejection of the dictate of reason that "the less cannot beget the greater." He is guilty of an unwarranted and superstitious credulity with regard to his doctrine of the nature of matter. Despite contemporary amusement at the dogmatism of the nineteenth-century materialists, it must still be the conception of orthodox materialism that all reality is body, that all being is material. Further, the materialist must take the position that he has a perfectly clear and distinct idea of what matter is. Yet this is far from being the case: our concept of matter is one of the most vague and obscure of all our ideas. No great amount of reflection is required to show that it is the ideal aspect of things that must be considered primordial. It is mind that is the instrument for the fashioning of all metaphysics, including the materialistic. Everything, even the minutest particle of matter, must be known before it can even be called a reality or a constituent part of a real being. Even the smallest atom can scarcely be called pure matter, matter devoid of everything immaterial, for if it were completely unlike mind it could not be known by the mind. Yet the materialistic monist, according to his own principles, must hold to his trust that he knows exactly what matter is and how it accounts for all reality —the reality not alone of bodies but as well of order, life, consciousness, mind and all the rest.

From superstitions in the order of thought issue superstitions in the order of practise. Fear is traditionally a result of superstition and it is found not only as the minor fears of the illiterate and the savage but also as the major fears of the philosopher. Thus as a result of the monistic fallacy certain characteristic dreads reveal themselves. There is that new fear of God which is almost the mark of the modern world. It is expressed in the determined attempts being made to destroy belief in God. It is evidenced also in contemporary prejudice against arguments from reason that lead by an inexorable logic from the things of our experience to the reality of an infinite mind, the beginning and end of all things. Again, there is the fear of admitting and considering the evidence for the existence and nature of the human soul, of free-will, of an absolute law of morality, of responsibility and a future life. This fear can mask itself in various ways, but it still remains a fear of the definite and the particular pronouncements that reason must make with regard to the self, its nature and relation to God. Thus there is the refusal to admit that man is free, but a readiness to admit that everything is free; the refusal to admit that man has a soul, but a readiness to admit the existence of a world-soul; the refusal to admit that God exists, but a readiness to admit that everything is divine. This is the fear that leads to an attempt to escape from reality and from reason into a world of illusions.

It is the major superstitions that are the source of present disasters and future dangers. The revolt against reason, the refusal to follow the argument where it leads, the fear that goes on to the denial and distortion of facts: these are destructive of a realistic view of the world and of ourselves. The idolatrous pride and self-will that arise from the monistic doctrine; the worship of creatures, and especially the worship of man himself as divine; the horrors that result when the will or passion of men makes mockery of the eternal and unchangeable moral law: these are evils so enormous and impressive that it is sometimes difficult to see them for what they are. Yet superstitions they remain. Clouding and enchaining the reason and will of modern man, they make him more really the slave and victim of the powers of evil than they ever could if they lacked the prestige of the philosopher's name and the authority of the State's power and might.

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WHAT IS SIMPLICITY?

By ALBERT J. STEISS

The mind yearns to make things simple, says Mr. Steiss, but its natural tendency can lead to grave disappointment. Evidence of false and arbitrary simplification abounds. It is especially prevalent in the field of religion, where a number of recent movements owe their success to it. A "decent respect for reality" implies awareness of the complexities of life and truth. Simplicity is valuable only when it is the product of order. What this "order" is the paper attempts to indicate.—The Editors.

SIMPLICITY, with its corollary of peace, is a natural goal of the mind. All speculation on the many-sided phenomena of things has this object: to find their common essence, to link them together, to make them simple. Multiplicity wearies the mind; our reaction is a kind of impatience; the mind works in order to rest. Since this tendency is natural, there can be no objection to it except that it is always liable to be exaggerated. At a time like the present, when a confusion of principles has made life seem even more complicated than it did formerly, the nostalgia for simplicity is intensified. And the times have also turned this nostalgia—or concentrated it—in a special direction. It has been thwarted in the physical sphere. Science has demonstrated with increasing clearness the inescapable complexity of the material world; showing the bodily structure of things to be not only highly organized, poised on exact and delicate nerves of law; but even, in its more fundamental action, to involve apparently a principle of indeterminacy, an unpredictable element resembling free will. Hence the search for simplicity can be pursued, with confidence, only in the intellectual and moral spheres; in politics, philosophy, art, religion. And here exaggeration is much in evidence.

Communism has simplified the problem of man's political destiny by denying that he has a higher one; it has adjusted class differences by eliminating classes, or perhaps reducing them all to one.

In art, a modern fashion of simplicity is to place all the emphasis on the side of instinct. D. H. Lawrence a few years ago narrowed the field alike of morality, mysticism and esthetics, by contending that the only sin was to deny life, and that life was a function of the vivid senses, and not of the cold intellect and the laborious will. His attitude is widely assented to, and indeed scarcely seems immoderate by comparison with more recent theories. Thus surrealism not only deprecates the interference of conscious thought in the production of art, but has gone so far—in the theory of Salvador Dali, for example—as to assign the production of art to the functioning of paranoiac states of mind deliberately cultivated.

This is in turn a reflection, though greatly exaggerated, of the Freudian simplification in the field of psychology. Freud found the well-spring of all primitive motivation in the suppressed impulses of the sex instinct. He intimated, as James Thrall Soby points out in "After Picasso," that what was suppressed might really be legitimate and valuable; the surrealists converted this into the esthetic principle that only the suppressed was valuable.

Perhaps nowhere has the appetite for simplification been indulged with less discernment than in the field of religion. The ease with which the modern spirit dismisses all that side of religion which corresponds to its reasoning and scientific capabilities — namely, dogma — far exceeds the boldness of the ancient heretics who merely substituted one doctrine for another. Liberalism indeed takes a more extreme step when it explains religion entirely in terms of psychology; for to make God simply the product of psychic needs, ignoring the hint that in an orderly cosmos there would be some objective counterpart to these needs, is evidently to cut away religion altogether. But in general the age is less cynical, and best represented by a picture of formless, agnostic moralism: what matters is to lead a good life. If one worships, it need not be in church, or with an organized community, or according to formula. Let one raise his heart to God in the open air; under the influence of natural beauty; or prompted by private well-being. Clearly such an attitude rules out more elements of traditional religion than only dogma. Nor, apparently, does the fact that in other departments of life man is social, systematic, imaginative, dependent on external expression of ideas, suggest to him that there is any incongruity in trying to carry on his religious life like a disembodied intelligence.

The field of dogma is not entirely neglected, but here too is observed a preoccupation for simplicity. The principle, "If thy eye be single, thy whole body will be lightsome," has been made the great commandment of the law. Thus, apparently, it is the secret of the enthusiasm which many new religions inspire, that they isolate one aspect of the truth, easier to understand and practise than the whole truth. Or else, as in Christian Science, the aspect is not only isolated but inter-

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preted with great imaginative license. The Oxford Group movement belongs to this latter class. It is the contention of Buchmanism that by the surrender of self to the Divine plan the soul at once attains a peace and strength, whose possibility Christian saints have elsewhere professed as the motive for a lifetime of asceticism. That this doctrine of the Oxford Group is supported by the experience of its converts, would not have surprised the saints who had the same sort of experience themselves; nor spiritual directors, accustomed to guiding novices in the spiritual life. There are, of course, other elements in the powerful attraction of Buchmanism; among many good ones, two involve a similar ingenuousness: one is the psychological benefit of public confession; the other is the doctrine that we may expect an explicit Divine guidance in the conduct of our more important daily affairs—a promise which stirs the imagination of all of us to whom the complexity of life is a burden.

It is true that theology may seem to lend countenance to our industrious simplifying, by confessing that simplicity is a Divine attribute. But once we have traced the argument back to God, we are in a position to observe that there is another side to simplicity, which is infinity. And indeed it is a great presumption to aspire after the one quality when the other is so far beyond us.

But in truth it is weakness and not strength which prompts us to this presumption. The complex face of things is so difficult to read, the sphinx so reticent: we should gladly believe that it is, in Wilde's phrase, a sphinx without a secret. It would be a relief from our labor of balancing the many principles to which we owe allegiance, if we could discover that the number of principles were smaller. But if simplicity is an attribute in God, it is perhaps more relevant to remember that it is a virtue in man, not separable from strength and effort.

In view of the weakness thus implied in simplification, it is significant that practically every religion derived from Catholic Christianity is simpler than the original. It may indeed be laid down as a rule that no heretic has ever made Christian doctrine more complex, but always the reverse. He has denied one or more persons of the Trinity; he has ruled out belief in the Divine nature of Christ, or else in the human nature; he has refused to admit a human will in Christ, or admitted the human will alone; he has eliminated the function of grace in human salvation, or else assigned to it the sole function. In the sixteenth century the efficacy of some or all the sacraments was denied, and the Mass discarded. In later times the tendency has been to forget liturgy entirely. And the process culminates in the "great refusal" of agnosticism, in which the mind entirely rejects the responsibilities of reason, by casting doubt on the possibility of accepting any dogma at all. In a conspectus of doctrinal history, therefore, simplification arrays itself, with suggestive constancy, on the side of denial.

There are occasions indeed when it is zeal which betrays us into taking a one-sided view of things. Simplification has this advantage, that it yields ready formulas of action; whereas those who follow a more patient and considered approach to questions often seem, like Hamlet, to achieve nothing but a distinct view of difficulties. It is true also that the partizans of moderate views often lacks the enthusiasm of those whose idealism is connected with the hope of great and sudden results. And one can sympathize with the followers of a Marxist program to this extent: that the spectacle, if not the actual experience, of poverty and suffering, due in part to injustice and want of regard, does not inspire patience. But the fact still remains that a vivid realization of real evils, in combination with a philosophy of humanitarian and materialistic idealism, is not an infallible equipment for finding the truth. And when impassioned zeal finds expression in such phrases as, that the existence of God is of no consequence in the face of suffering, one must object that this is not the testimony of universal experience.

But elsewhere simplification too often lacks the excuse either of idealism or of exasperation. As a reasoned approach to knowledge it takes refuge in the prejudice that the dry comment of common sense gives the last word in all practical questions. This maxim has a specious realism; but regarded in the light of the principles assumed by it—namely, that what is true must likewise be clear and obvious, or else that life has no time for truth which is other than superficial—it amounts to an abdication of the dignity of the mind. Indeed, in the face of the centuries which have spent their energies in the effort to distinguish and coordinate the world of thought which lies below the obvious; and in the presence of modern science which shows palpable reality linked, in the physical world, to almost incredible complexity; it is mere vulgarity to dismiss the more careful and distinct labors of speculation as impossible or not worth while.

The danger of such an attitude reduces to this, that it neglects a decent respect for reality. Complexity, like other facts, has its rights; valid no less when the complexity is spiritual than when it is material. The disregard of these rights prompts the unreal extremes to which, in these days, religion, politics, art and philosophy are forced to lend themselves.

Perhaps the root of the error is an unwarranted simplification of the idea of simplicity itself. The notion of unity is stressed; the multiplicity which, in an organic world, must always qualify unity, is forgotten. True simplicity does not work by cut-

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ting away multiple elements, but by coordinating them. Man cannot perfect his world by narrowing and impoverishing it, but only by organizing it. That is the highest simplicity which includes the widest multiplicity; and that is the most perfect organism which is most highly organized. The test of simplicity is not singleness but order.

Likewise that rest which is the goal of simplicity must be distinguished. The mind, which is always living, can have only a qualified rest; it should be called poise rather than rest, because it is not an escape from effort, but a continuous result of it. Thus is justified the proposition that simplicity is a virtue.

CRAFT vs. INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

By JOHN M. CORRIDAN

WHEN the executive council of the American Federation of Labor voted on August 5 to suspend within thirty days the members of the Committee for Industrial Organization unless they discontinued their organization activities, the council declared that the issue involved was not that of Craft versus Industrial Unionism, but whether the majority should rule in the A. F. of L. Nevertheless, it was this very issue, namely, that the craft-union leadership of the A. F. of L. had failed to organize the unorganized, which has fomented the present strife in the ranks of American labor.

The question of the superiority of the craft over the industrial union is by no means a recent one, but one of five decades duration and more. In 1881, when all the unions met in Pittsburgh to effect a new federation, the issue that almost split the convention was the same then as it is today. At that time the craftsmen, being in the majority, attempted to call the new group the Federation of Organized Trade Unions of the United States and Canada. Whereupon the Knights of Labor, as the "one big union" of the times, representing everyone in its membership regardless of craft, skill, creed, sex or color, threatened withdrawal if the phrase "trade unions" were alone used. A compromise resulted and the name was changed to the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions.

Five years later, the Knights of Labor saw their membership swell to its peak of 700,000—indicative of unskilled labor's sentiments toward the "closed-door" policy of the trade unions. The same year, however, that saw their zenith, marked also the beginning of their decline. Contrary to the wishes of Terence V. Powderly, the leader of the Knights, thousands of them participated in the May Day strike of 1886, that had been called by Samuel P. Gompers, the president of the recently organized federation. The Knights' discredited leadership together with the loss of several general strikes in 1890, and their futile hostility against the A. F. of L., the successor of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in the fall of 1886, caused their numbers to dwindle to less than 100,000 by 1890 before finally disappearing from the scene in 1900.

As an organization the Knights of Labor had vanished, but not without handing on their spirit to several industrial leaders, of whom John L. Lewis, militant president of the United Mine Workers, is the outstanding successor at present. So far has that spirit carried the industrial movement on the road to recovery that the industrialists were able to claim one-third of the 3,000,000 members of the A. F. of L. represented at the convention in 1935. In addition to the United Mine Workers the prominent industrial unions include among others such unions as the United Textile Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies Garment Workers and the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.

In the light of the past history of the relative merits attached to the craft and industrial forms of unionism, it can readily be realized that an actual solution is not to be expected for some years to come, although the crafts are losing at present. Furthermore, present conditions, both here and abroad, make any predictions as to the future a hazardous undertaking. Yet certain factors do stand out which, although they do not warrant our forecasting what will be, are yet an indication of what should be. Just what those factors are, the remainder of this article will be given over to briefly describing by contrasting the past and present conditions of these two forms of unionism.

The craft union, to begin with, is an association of employees bound together by common employment, skill and interest in a relatively narrow occupation or group of closely related occupations. Composed of the upper grades of the working class the particular craft or calling is based upon the attainment of a relatively high degree of skill after a rather prolonged period of training. Conservative and as jealous of their skill as others are of property rights, the trade unionists are said to be generally "selfish" and "craft-conscious." Their first and last concern is the improvement of their own immediate group. This "craft-consciousness" was, in the early days of the nation, labor's

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principal asset in forcing from a rugged individualistic environment the right to organize.

As the nation and its industry grew and expanded, however, this common interest of each craft for itself soon manifested its extreme selfish nature. For when the need for cooperation and unity of purpose became imperative that labor might match strides with the march of industry, labor too often presented the spectacle of a house divided against itself. To date, the only form of organization that has proved practical and enduring has been the loose federation type as we find it in the A. F. of L. where no power is given save what the individual unions choose to give and no authority granted to enforce its program save that of moral suasion.

Employers were quick to take advantage of this inherent weakness in the federation. One union was played against another so that it has not been unusual for one craft to aid an employer against a striking fellow-craft union. Again, employers, following the principle of divide and conquer, have often placed themselves in the strategic position where the trade agreements of a number of crafts all working in the same industry terminate at different times during the year. As concerted action under such circumstances is practically impossible, unions have found out that one group may strike and tie up production for all the others, even though the latter are not interested and have no grievances.

The craft unions have not only had to contend with dissension from within, but also have been forced to accept the rapid advance in machine technique. Skilled labor, as a consequence, is replaced by unskilled since employers, stimulated by the motive of profits, are restless in their efforts to reduce labor costs. It is not to be wondered, then, that in the face of these adverse circumstances, the A. F. of L. could only show a membership of 2,532,261 in 1932, whereas due to the extraordinary circumstances arising out of the World War, it had reached its peak of 4,078,740 in 1920.

In all justice and fairness to trade unionism, it must be said that it is difficult to see how any more than 20 percent of labor in 1920 or 12 percent in 1936 could have been organized mainly along craft lines. Employers, protected in the courts by statutes imbued with the spirit of laissez-faire individualism, have always manifested their hostility toward the unions whenever possible, and tolerated them whenever necessary. Unhampered by ethical principles they have never hesitated to make use of such powerful weapons as the injunction, the "black list" and the "yellow dog" contract. They have had the advantage in the past of exploiting the large polyglot labor supply that flowed into the country from Europe, in successive waves of immigration, knowing nothing of the American laborers' traditional plane of living.

The industrial union, on the other hand, is much more inclusive as to membership than the trade union. It is an association composed of all the workers in a given industry, regardless of craft, occupation or degree of skill. The trade unionist thinks largely in terms of his job, while the industrial unionist visualizes the job chiefly as part of a bigger process. For this reason its proponents claim that it is a structural form much better adapted to the modern industrial and capitalistic environment. Its principle purpose is to parallel the employers' organizations.

At present the industrial unionist maintains that the time is ripe to organize the unorganized. Immigration has ceased. Unskilled labor, through the educational activities of our public school system and the trade unions, now wants and demands as its right a living wage consonant with the American plane of living. The present administration has cut itself away from the moorings of the past in recognizing and fostering labor's efforts to organize. Under section 7a of the NRA the government attempted for the first time to promulgate a statutory requirement of collective bargaining on a scale that would cover all of the country's industries. Not to be thwarted by the Supreme Court's rejection of the codes of the NRA as unconstitutional, the present administration more clearly defined the right to form labor organizations and, in addition, definitely sanctioned national unions as representatives for collective bargaining under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935.

Industrial unionists, moreover, point out with much force that some enlightened employers plainly see the handwriting on the wall. If they must have unions, they would prefer industry or plant unions so that they can deal with all employees more or less as a unit. Other employers, fighting to keep the present status, would break the back of unionism by training in their own shops these unskilled workers in the new processes that are rapidly displacing skilled labor. They conclude, therefore, that it is suicide for the trade unions and for labor to continue living in the traditions of the past.

But can the trade unions tear themselves away from that tradition or will they have to be forced? Time alone will give the answer. To the writer it seems that if they refuse to cooperate, as the majority of them at present do, they will have missed their greatest opportunity to unionize a majority of labor. Now they have the chance to assume the leadership of a more militant labor movement and guide it along the lines of conservative unionism. To refuse to do so will be to play into the hands of individualistic employers by continuing a civil war within their own ranks—and that neither of the employers' choice nor of their own making.

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AN OLD GRAD WRITES IN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

MY DEAR President Smith:

Before I send you my small contribution to your Unfettered Fund for a Greater College, I want to have a heart-to-heart talk with you on paper. You know so much about education, and I so little, that I could never brave a frontal discussion with you. When and if you read this letter, I shall be spared the visual humiliation of your pain!

The truth is that I'm in an emotional dither! It's the fault of your expert publicity director—he's too good! The Old Grads' dinner last night wore down every last shred of my resistance coating—the old songs, the mellow lights (and wines!) and your own superb oratory ending with that plea to "keep the faith" for my sons and even great-grandsons. It all seemed so clear, so inevitable, the perfect union of a glowingly mysterious future with my own nostalgic past. But tonight, in the meager security of my own home, horrid doubts have assailed me. Only you can dispel them.

You see, it's not "the faith" that bothers me. Not that I'm quite sure what "the faith" actually is, but I'm still able to paraphrase lustily the old family Bible and say, "Go forth, son, and tell thy son that his son's son shall have a diploma!" That's the way I still feel about "the faith," even though I know in the end that it's going to cost me money. What really bothers me is that I have so little to go on except "faith." I took my own college days for granted, but my son is a different sort of animal. He keeps asking questions I can't answer, not about his studies, you understand, but about the way things are run at college. And his questions start me on further questions of my own. I won't annoy you with all of them, but two relate directly to your Unfettered Fund.

The first is this: are the enormous sums you have been putting into "plant," into bricks and mortar, a truly effective insurance of "the faith"? The second is rather more obscure. Is that portion of my probable check not earmarked for "plant" to be used to create real teachers—or merely to endow scholars in ivory towers?

I understand fully that education is an art. Strangely enough, for a business man, I bitterly resent so-called practical education as something that stultifies much-needed imagination in modern life. But there are laws of technique and proportion in art as well as in business. Any art must build on common sense if it hopes to attain uncommon beauty. Both my questions are prompted by the business man's instinct for technique and proportion. The business man can be an artist, too, in the organization of endeavor to a given end. So do not, I beg of you, consider my questions as wholly impertinent. They pertain directly to the success of your artistic effort.

Take, for example, this matter of "plant." Your present plant has both size and splendor, yet my memory tells me many things about the quality of education achieved under far more modest externals. There were those fascinated hours spent in the shabby room of Professor Cortland, where all sense of time, modernity and conveniences vanished before the onslaught of his clear ideas and apt alluring words. I have even been told that Socrates conducted a one-man university on two legs in the streets of Athens. It seems to me that where adult and adolescent minds meet in eager intercourse and inquiry, there, and there only, does one discover the essence of the university. What I most want to know is this: as between another $1,000,000 spent on "plant," and the income on $1,000,000 spent in obtaining half a dozen new and superlative educators and teachers, which is best going to preserve "the faith" for my son's sons?

As a business man, I cannot forget that "plant" not only produces no income, but actually creates a demand for more income for maintenance and upkeep. The $1,000,000 you probably plan to spend on "plant" would, at 4 percent, endow six professors for centuries to come. In two centuries, the interest on $1,000,000 would, by itself, aggregate $8,000,000. It would build in that time $8,000,000 worth of tradition by and in minds and men. But if the $1,000,000 is spent on "plant," it would not only mean the loss of $8,000,000 in salaries over these two centuries, but it would eat up nearly $8,000,000 more in upkeep and maintenance. Where will you get that $8,000,000 for plant operation? Will it not mean the sacrifice of six more professorships? And will this, do you think, insure "the faith" for my great-great-grandson?

I am just a bit afraid that too many marble halls may end in too many marble heads. It is all a question of proportion. And it does seem that we as contributors to an Unfettered Fund, which you and your trustees can spend at discretion, should know something about your standard of judgment in expanding "plant" incessantly. We know that many of your professors and instructors find their salaries so slim that they have to look for outside work to keep their families in modest decency. This hardly increases their energy for teaching or research. Yet "plant" con-

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tinues to grow, not only in floor space, but also in magnificence. Man is not educated by bricks alone.

Then there is the question of teachers. Even if we, the contributing laymen, were wholly satisfied as to your sense of proportion between "plant" and brains, we would still be assailed by doubts about the quality of those brains, and for this reason, that the distinction between teachers and research scholars seems to have been badly scrambled somewhere on the Olympian heights.

My specific, and perhaps amateurish, suggestion is this: why not create a clear division of labor within your faculty, similar to the division between a production and a sales department in a well-organized business? Why have your scholars teach at all (unless they happen to love it as a relaxation) and why expect your naturally gifted teachers to do any original research? The successful imparting of knowledge is a totally different human function from the successful compiling of knowledge. Can you imagine what would happen to the art of business organization if salesmen had to spend half their time in the designing laboratory, or if designing engineers had to set forth every six months on "the road"?

Your excellent Professor Stoneleigh is a famous geologist, but my son tells me that his lectures have about as much life as the last glacial period in North America. I know from my own reading that his book on American fossils is an incredible combination of German and Latin syntax in faintly recognizable English words. Now my son loves geology, but only because he happened to spend an evening with Mr. Mortimer—an assistant instructor in Professor Stoneleigh's course. Mr. Mortimer knows and feels that fossils were once living things; the Professor merely knows it. He long since ceased to feel anything.

If you would only send Stoneleigh permanently to Arizona or New Mexico and then let Mortimer translate Stoneleigh's discoveries to your geology students, the combined result might give me more hope than I can now summon. Let us suppose that it takes Stoneleigh three years to collect the material for a new book. I hazard the opinion that it must take him an additional three years to write the book, three years lost from research. Mortimer, using Stoneleigh's material, could pobably write the same book in six months. But that is not the way you do things. You expect both Stoneleigh, the scholar, and Mortimer, the teacher, to do original research. You expect them both to write "original" books, impeding the flow of Stoneleigh's scholarship and interrupting the teaching verve of Mortimer. In each case, you are withdrawing the man from his best endeavor. In Mortimer's case, you are withdrawing much of his time and energy from that one most important job of persuading, beguiling and cajoling my sons and grandsons into loving the distilled elixir of scholarship and thus keeping "the faith."

If you tell me that professional pride makes my plan impractical, and that recognized distinctions between teachers and scholars might disrupt academic calm and good feeling, then I can only say with outlandish directness that any such atmosphere of petty pride and fuzzy thinking is not calculated to make my descendants better men and more intelligent citizens. It is your job, as I see it, to disinfect any such atmosphere.

I am not contributing (if I do decide to contribute) to maintain a university for its own sake, nor to maintain a provincial society of scholars who think and write only for each other's benefit and approval. I would like to see a college and university where adolescence may achieve maturity through contact with clear thinking, with a common-sense hierarchy of scholars and teachers and with an ideal that youth must be intelligently and artistically served if middle age is to be saved.

Before signing that check, I am about to settle down by my reading lamp, because I deeply want my memory to play me the trick of taking me back to a dingy lecture hall where a famous and devoted teacher once elicited my strange affection for the fragile ghosts of history. This teacher had never made an "original contribution to scholarship." He was merely a teacher and the author of a few secondary textbooks. In that hall, the wooden benches, hacked with knives, were a secret torture. The room was cold in winter, too. But Marie Antoinette had passed through it once on her way to the Place de la Concorde. Our "mere teacher" had arranged that! Had the room been of marble and chromium, and had the teacher spent years buried in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the French Queen could not have passed before us with more dignity, nor with more beauty as the setting sun touched her eyes for a mere instant.

I remain, dear Mr. President, a well-wishing but sorely puzzled

OLD GRAD.

To Gerard Manley Hopkins

The spirit and the shining mind, all sense,
are never stasis in you; O, they find
the one commotion which is the world, immense
and mournful, and by the perfect fact so signed
all matter's made dimensionless. How loud
in what glad gown you go! in piety, bold,
not sorrowing. O, often on a cloud
you ride, sometimes on a pool, who told
me Mary has a hand in spring, that breath
exhaled of her is all we beathe, that motion
is the body of God. By you dread death
becomes hope's hero risen, the mind an ocean,
least leaf, least blade of grass, least, dingy bird,
immortal movement whose sounding shapes the Word.

C. A. MILLSPAUGH.

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MR. FLETCHER ON HOPKINS

By JAMES GERARD SHAW

IN HIS article on Gerard Manley Hopkins, in the January issue of the *American Review,* John Gould Fletcher demonstrates once again that there are depths in Hopkins's poetry which mere literary criticism, however excellent, cannot fathom. Every lover of Hopkins will be ready to sympathize with Mr. Fletcher in his impatience with the reactionaries who still deny the title poet to him who dares clothe his thought in any but the orthodox Tennysonian versifications. One might wish, however, that Mr. Fletcher had displayed a little less forthrightness in places and a little more of the "cautiously accurate" manner of his much quoted Father Lahey.

It was inevitable that in offering an interpretation of the spiritual life of a member of a religious order, any man whose spiritual viewpoint was neither that of the order nor that of the Church to which the order belongs, should fall into patent error. It is less excusable that some of this error should be laid at the door of Father Gerald F. Lahey, a member of the order in which Hopkins spent half his life. Most important of the misquotations of the poet's biographer is this: ". . . Moreover there is the testimony of Father Lahey himself who admits that Hopkins was largely a failure as a Jesuit, and was found by his superiors to be 'impractical.' " I shall dismiss as beyond Mr. Fletcher's knowledge the fact that a man of Father Hopkins's purity of soul and fidelity to ideals could not be a failure as a Jesuit whether he wrote a few verses to amuse the community or a thousand poems in genuine anguish of soul. The statement to be questioned is that Father Lahey testifies that Hopkins was largely a failure as a Jesuit. I can find no such statement in Father Lahey's book ("Gerard Manley Hopkins"). I know to the contrary that he thinks very highly of Hopkins as a Jesuit and that the following excerpt from an article of his in THE COMMONWEAL for October 20, 1933, is a fair exposition of his views on the subject. "All the formal religious orders of the Church have each a peculiar spirit which gives expression or emphasis to one of the various facets of the character of Christ. Hopkins's poems could never have been written in just the same way had he never been a Jesuit, and they can only receive their proper interpretation by studying Hopkins in them as a Jesuit. They are the most perfect illustrations, as yet, of the ideals of the Society of Jesus. *Quod in poeta latet in Jesuita patet.*" (The italics are Father Lahey's.) Whatever this may say of the poet it leaves no room for doubting Father Lahey's opinion of the Jesuit.

Mr. Fletcher encloses the word "impractical" in quotation marks. Not only does Father Lahey not put the word in the mouth of any superior of the poet, but a careful search of his volume fails to reveal a single passage in which the word "impractical" so much as occurs. At any rate, impracticality is not in itself a great crime to impute to one who was at once a poet and a professor of Greek.

Another instance of the same misreading: ". . . The moral struggle [implicit in Hopkins's poems] was primarily concerned with one man's devotion to a God of whom he had no proof beyond the illumination of interior conviction, as Father Lahey frankly admits." That Hopkins ever felt that he had no proof of God beyond the illumination of interior conviction is scarcely possible, that Father Lahey frankly admits him to have thus run counter to orthodox Catholicism is somewhat bewildering. Failing an apposite citation, we may perhaps deduce that Mr. Fletcher has been confused by a paragraph in which Father Lahey points the distinction between supernatural faith and natural reason. In it (pages 42-43) he speaks of ". . . the infinite gulf between supernatural faith and natural reason. They are in different orders of being. Hopkins realized that faith was a pure gift of God, which, once given, made any arguments from natural prudence or natural reason wholly superfluous." Mr. Fletcher has possibly confused this supernatural faith with belief in the existence of God.

Another such "quotation" is answered by its own timidity: "The very fervency of his conversion motivated as it may have been by some personal crisis as well as by a crisis of thought at the time, as Father Lahey almost hints. . . ." If what Father Lahey "frankly admits" is so hard to find in his book it is hardly worth looking for something he "almost hints."

Hopkins's life, we are told, "ended in exile, obscurity and mental desolation." Exile and obscurity are not the terrors to one who has given his life to God in religion that they are to men with different viewpoints, and they may be passed over as unimportant to Hopkins. The mental desolation, however, darkens the picture of Hopkins's death unduly. It may be that Mr. Fletcher has information on the death of the poet which justifies this expression. Lacking this information we may accept the evidence we have to the contrary from those who shared with him his last days. They tell us, as Father Lahey records in his chapter on "The Man," of a bright, happy personality, beloved by his associates, busy at the time of his death with critical works on Aristophanes and Homer; a man whose death was a quiet, peaceful passing to eternity and whose last words, spoken two or three times over, were: "I am so happy, I am so happy."

And, of course, we have the worst interpretation put on Hopkins's cries from out his spiritual night. Says Mr. Fletcher: "It [the moral struggle in Hopkins] concerned itself more and more with the problem of whether that man the poet-priest Hopkins was in himself worthy of salvation, or could still struggle and take steps after it." This note in Hopkins should be heard as an echo of Paul's "For I am not conscious to myself of anything, yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord," and not as a cry of black despair. This desolation which wrings from his soul some of the poet's most beautiful lines is a well-marked phenomenon of the spiritual life. Any treatise on the interior life will contain a chapter on this night of the soul which comes to all who lead an intensely spiritual life. Father Lahey speaks of it in his work on Hopkins as "the place where Golgotha and Thabor meet," and I think this phrase is almost sufficient to supernaturalize Hopkins's agony and differentiate it

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from the miserable natural despair with which it is confounded. We might add with Father Lahey that, "seen in this light, his poems cease to be tragic."

Hopkins is to Mr. Fletcher one "seeking for some intellectual stay in the world of fleeting appearances." Making all due allowance for difference of viewpoint, it is difficult to understand how there can be missed in Hopkins's poetry the presence of a mighty, all-pervading, terribly permanent God. Hopkins was not seeking an intellectual stay—he found one and he was proclaiming it to the world. A vibrant, masculine realization of God throbs like a tremendous heart-beat through his work. To Hopkins "The world is charged with the Grandeur of God"; all things come from Him, He is "God, Giver of breath and bread; World's strand, sway of the sea, Lord of the living and the dead." He is the one permanent thing to which all other things in the world's whirlwind must be pointed, everything must be judged by His standard, He alone does not change, He is "Ground of Being and the granite of it," "The Simon Peter of the soul." Hopkins sought no other intellectual stay.

Toward the end of his paper, Mr. Fletcher makes a very good point in regretting the narrowing down of theme and treatment in Hopkins, but he follows it up with a comment on "this inability to bridge over the gulf between the theological and the human." Surely this statement is surprising enough to merit elucidation. For Hopkins saw God in everything and could therefore paint a comprehensive picture only by bringing the Divine into the canvas. It would rather seem that in the vast majority of his poems, he could not help bridging the gulf between the human and the theological and he would seem unable to divorce the two. There are a few poems in which he leaves the human cut off from the Divine, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

Even in his purely literary criticism, Mr. Fletcher is sometimes a little too forthright. For instance: ". . . His early work betrays the equal influence of Keats and William Morris; Father Lahey, whose literary judgments may safely be disregarded, says Moore and Tennyson." The tactless parenthesis might have passed more easily, if Mr. Fletcher's opposing teams of Keats and Morris versus Moore and Tennyson had been a little more thoughtfully selected. From the several poets of whom Father Lahey finds traces in the few earlier poems which he mentions, Mr. Fletcher has chosen two. By what authority, it is not easy to perceive. In his brief book, Father Lahey is not overly concerned with the earlier poems and is rather inclined to make between them and the latter poems as complete a division artistically as there is chronologically. Nowhere does he generalize on the influences to be perceived in Hopkin's early works. He cites some of these and sees in them severally resemblances to Moore, Byron, Tennyson, Keats and Spenser. Moore's name, in spite of Father Lahey's plethora of comparisons between Hopkins and other poets, occurs but once in the volume. Then it is mentioned in connection with a poem which was written by a boy between the ages of five and fifteen, and which, unlike the later school poems, gives no indication of the poet to be. Father Lahey quotes from the poem and adds: "This poem reminds us somewhat of Moore, whose songs and poems Gerard had known since he was five years old." That Father Lahey means by this remark to indicate Moore as a marked influence in the formation of Hopkins, is at best doubtful. Tennyson is mentioned twice in context with the earlier poems. To a quotation from the school poem "Escatorial" Father Lahey (page 10) prefixes: "The tenor of its lines manifests a knowledge of Byron and at least an acquaintance with Tennyson." Of the octet "Heaven-Haven" he says: "Its delicacy suggests, and almost surpasses, Tennyson, even at his best."

The mystery of how Mr. Fletcher came to single out Moore to the exclusion of others, as Father Lahey's conception of the early influence on Hopkins is enhanced by the juxtaposition of Moore and Keats, of Father Lahey's choice (sic) and Mr. Fletcher's choice. Mr. Fletcher quotes a passage from "A Vision of Mermaids," and says of it: "It is not difficult to see in the midst of the lush Keatsian detail of this poem . . . more than a promise of the poet who was destined to revise our entire concepts of the nature of English rhythm." By a coincidence, the passage chosen by Mr. Fletcher is one of several from the same poem cited by Father Lahey. Of this poem, Father Lahey, whose book, we may presume, lay on Mr. Fletcher's desk as he wrote his article, says (page 11): "It consists of 143 lines in heroic measure. Its rich luxuriousness, unrestraint and wholly delightful fancy make it an extraordinary achievement, sometimes it breathes of Spenser, other times of Keats." Listening to Father Lahey's phrases, "heroic measure, rich luxuriousness, unrestraint, wholly delightful fancy," one wonders why he could not be credited with having seen some trace of the influence of Keats in the early Hopkins.

To begin a criticism of a poet with the remark that the literary judgments of a previous critic may safely be disregarded is to invite comparison. The adequate drawing of this comparison requires more time and care, and more literary skill than I can bring to the task. What I would like to do is search in the light of Mr. Fletcher's revelations for the deficiencies which condemn Father Lahey's literary judgment of Hopkins to disregard. (I may say in passing that I personally consider Father Lahey to have too much in common with Father Hopkins—priesthood in the Society of Jesus superimposed upon rare natural gifts of talents and temperament—to be his best critic.) We have already seen that Mr. Fletcher scarcely does full justice to Father Lahey's judgment of the earlier verse. Beginning his analysis of Hopkins's first major poems, Mr. Fletcher says: "They emerge from close study of the unrhymed choruses in Milton's 'Samson Agonistes.'" Father Lahey (page 97) not only makes the same deduction but relates it to Hopkins's theory and illustrates it by a quotation. Hopkins's metrical discovery, sprung rhythm, surely not the least part of his contribution to English letters, is disposed of with this: "A full analysis of its origin and quality may be found in Father Lahey's volume." In a fine analysis of the technical innovations of Swinburne (whose influence on Hopkins is generally admitted) Mr. Fletcher lets drop another inter-

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esting dictum. He remarks that to the smoothly flowing, discursive style of Keats and Tennyson, "Browning added little except a tendency to turn from academic versification into conversational doggerel." There is truth of course in this breath-taking statement, but there are some who will not hold this literary judgment in high regard. The abrupt disposal of Browning's versification is also of interest to those who might be inclined to credit Browning with a little of the "savage style" influence on Hopkins which Mr. Fletcher sees coming from Whitman.

This Whitman influence, Mr. Fletcher tells us, came to Hopkins in the form of a "shock of amazed recognition on being confronted with a kindred spirit." This is a strong point which one would like to see developed. However, the two men are so vastly different that it may require further evidence of the "shock of amazed recognition"—and of its effects—to demonstrate that the bond which drew Hopkins to Whitman was really the sympathy of kindred spirits and not the attraction of opposite species of the same genus.

The introduction of Whitman as an influence on Hopkins seems to be, apart from the conclusion arrived at from a totally false evaluation of the spiritual forces at work in the soul of the poet-priest, Mr. Fletcher's one major addition to the literary judgment of Father Lahey. For, his "rediscovery of early Saxon practise through the development of sprung rhythm," taken with his previous sentences on the subject, can only mean that the new rhythm, which Hopkins tells us "had long been haunting his ear," bore a resemblance to the stress-accent of Anglo-Saxon verse. This much we can read, with other information on the history of sprung rhythm, in Hopkins's own prefatory essay.

Mr. Fletcher's main thesis is that Hopkins's "choice of the Jesuits was made at the cost of a severe and heavy sacrifice; the sacrifice of his own poetic talent." He demonstrates it thus: "From 1868 [the year of his entrance] to the time of the wreck of the steamer Deutschland in 1875, Hopkins wrote no poetry. The pressure on him intensified to such a degree and extent that when he wrote poetry again, it was as an entirely other, and novel, poet." To which we reply with the obvious question: was the other, and novel, poet a worse, or better, poet? For a fuller answer I recommend the article of Father Lahey's quoted in my first paragraph. In it, speaking of religious poetry, he writes: "But such poetry implicitly acknowledges an ever-growing tragedy of shackled hope enmeshed in infinite longing, a deep undercurrent of melancholy intermingling with the primal law of intrinsic goodness in man." If Mr. Fletcher could accept this viewpoint of the desolation in Hopkins's life, if he could look upon it as a well-known and much written about phenomenon of the spiritual life which is in no way peculiar to frustrated genius, he would see that he sufficiently answers his own questioning when he says, "The discipline of the Jesuits . . . served unquestionably to intensify these sensibilities, romantic as they originally were, toward a point where the natural sensuousness of his mind . . . took on a dignity and weight that brings it abreast of such a classical writer as Aeschylus himself." Perhaps, too, Mr. Fletcher with a better understanding of the spirituality underlying Hopkins's life as a Jesuit would reconsider his retort: "If the Jesuits cannot think of Hopkins as an ornament to their order, it is for the world to claim him as an ornament to its order." As it stands, I do not know what meaning this antithesis can have. Unless Mr. Fletcher would classify the whole Jesuit Order among "all those critics whose academic orthodoxy is now disturbed by his growing acceptance among men of letters as one of the great English classics of all time." One would like to know who "all those critics" are. Within the Society of Jesus there is possibly as much but certainly no more difference of opinion on Hopkins's merits as there is outside of it.

Since this reply was motivated by indignation at the misinterpretation of Father Lahey's work, it might be pointed out in conclusion that his little volume which has been aptly described as an "aperitif" was never intended to be a comprehensive life. A brief biographical sketch, with a delicate appreciation of the poet and a masterly analysis of the craftsman, it was written to introduce Hopkins to a wider circle of friends. In this it has succeeded admirably, but its very success makes a fuller work necessary to clarify the welter of misconception which has arisen around the Jesuit priest. Let us hope that the larger work will contain an ample chapter on "Spiritual Desolation."

Fighting-man's Widow

I've gotten help to lay you low
Under the burial-stone.
There you will be when the last winds blow,
And the last blue spear is thrown.

Little's the time I waste in sleep,
Keening you night and day.
Many's the quiet tear I weep,
Little I have to say.

I go and stand, as I stood before,
On my own square bit of land.
But you'll not be coming any more,
Waving your conquering hand.

Never a sight of your face I'll see,
Good though my eyes are yet,
Never your voice will call to me,
After the sun has set.

I see the storm-blown flowers pressed
Together in joy and pain,
But never your proud and wounded breast
Bared to the wind and rain.

I hear the blackbird, wild and sweet,
Singing away with a will,
But never a sound of your running feet
Over the empty hill.

HELENE MULLINS.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—Throughout the nation Catholic schools are participating in American Education Week, November 9-15, with the help of special pamphlets prepared by the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Religious education, Catholic Action, social justice, pre-parental training and world peace are especially emphasized. * * * At a recent meeting of the study circle of the Hong Kong Catholic Young Men's Society, a group made up almost entirely of converts, the following phases of Catholicism were brought out as particularly appealing to the Chinese mind: works of charity; educational efforts; the hard lives and sacrifices of missionaries and nuns; high ethical and moral standards; the unity of the Church; the indissolubility of marriage; certainty of doctrine; discipline; sympathy with genuine patriotism; respect for the dead and teachings on the immortality of the soul. * * * At the celebration of the 700th anniversary of the Catholic hospital of Liers, Belgium, Cardinal Van Roey of Malines referred to the Sisters who conduct it as "the unknown soldiers of Christ the King." * * * An Association of Catholic Journalists of the North has recently been formed to promote intimate collaboration among Catholic editors and journalists in the countries of northern Europe. * * * In the past thirty years there have been 1,550,000 patients admitted to the larger hospitals of Vienna. During that time the order of the Camillians, who have been entrusted with the pastoral care of these institutions, have heard 1,060,000 confessions, administered 1,400,000 Holy Communions, baptized 150,000, and given Extreme Unction to 230,000. * * * In five years of existence the Ravitaillement Intellectuel aux Missions, a branch of the Catholic University Students Aid to the Missions at Louvain, Belgium, have sent 23,000 volumes to missionaries in the Congo, India, Canada and Oceania. * * * The Jesuit "Day's Dedication Hour," which consists of a fifteen-minute talk and music by the St. Louis University Scholasticate choir and other groups, followed by a prayer from the Office or Mass for the day, a morning offering and a prayer for the dying, is beginning its second year of daily broadcasts over station WEW at 8 a.m. C.S.T.

The Nation.—The National Seaway Council which works for the completion of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence open seaway, published a letter it had received from President Roosevelt saying: "It is my very earnest hope that negotiations for the St. Lawrence project may be carried forward within the coming year to a successful and final conclusion." Governor Landon had also endorsed the project publicly for the Council. In 1934, a Senate majority voted favorable to the waterway, but the treaty with Canada to implement failed by twelve to receive the two-thirds majority necessary for passage. * * * During September the number of civilian employees of the federal government increased by 1,411. There were 645,967 on the payrolls of regular agencies; 49,145 on those of new agencies; and 140,542 under emergency and works program agencies. These figures include temporary employees. Of these, 114,611 worked in Washington and 721,093 "in the field." The net payroll for the month was $129,275,993. * * * The Treasury published its report for the first four months of the fiscal year. Receipts were $1,408,088,114 and expenditures $2,345,584,329 and the deficit $937,496,214. For the same period last year corresponding figures were: receipts, $1,233,899,703; expenditures, $2,627,159,679; deficit, $1,461,602,046. The public debt on October 1, 1935, was $29,461,602,046, and on October 1, 1936: $33,832,528,147. * * * John D. M. Hamilton: "Under our form of government a militant and a vigorous minority has a vital service to render to the nation. The Republican party, with the cooperation of those Democrats and independents who find common cause with us, will not fail in that obligation." James A. Farley: "No American need have any fear of the future. Franklin D. Roosevelt's mission is to see that all of us have a square deal. No individual and no corporation that is on the level with the people has any cause to dread Mr. Roosevelt's second term."

The Wide World.—Mussolini spoke on November 1 in Milan, outlining for Fascists a program by means of which his debate with Great Britain might be carried a step farther. What he had to say about Central Europe was familiar matter, excepting that there was a note of more than usually harsh criticism of France's Little Entente policy. But the point was that Britain must recognize Italy's "vital interests" in the Mediterranean or else "the Italian people would spring to their feet like one man." Their country was, he insisted, an island in the central sea, and they must acquire an "insular mentality." * * * The British for their part went ahead rearming, with special stress on airplanes. It was rumored that, since the capacity of British factories had been taxed to the limit, orders were being placed with American manufacturers in an effort to raise the total fighting strength of Britain's air force to 8,000 planes by 1939. British statesmen also put the damper on international discussion of offenses against the Spanish neutrality pact. * * * Oddly enough, the Madrid government rallied after it was assumed that all had been lost. Its armies attacked to the southeast of the city and reestablished railroad communication with the sea. The reason for this prowess was held to be arrival of planes and tanks in number from a "friendly power." In return for this unexpected turn of events, General Franco ordered a bombardment of Madrid. The principal target appears to have been the Ministry of the Interior. This was the first time a major European city has been bombed since the World War. There were many casualties. * * * General Hermann Goering, economic dictator of the Reich, inaugurated a new "four-year plan" for Germany during the week.

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In a characteristic address, he stated that the government would fix prices and regulate charges, excepting wages and salaries. Certain privations were, he declared, unavoidable. He himself had apparently lost nearly thirty American pounds, as a result of eating less butter. Shortage of raw materials was evident, but it was reliably asserted that the supplies most needed by the armament industries had not dwindled unduly. * * * The Belgian situation righted itself, and there appeared to be no immediate danger of a Cabinet crisis. Dispatches indicated, however, that fortification of the Belgian frontier was being considered in French military circles. * * * The 1937 budget, presented by the Blum government during the past week, will undoubtedly be attacked in the Chamber when that body reconvenes. It provides for "extraordinary expenditures" of $1,210,000,000, much of which will be devoted to financing the mechanization of the army. * * * King Edward VIII addressed Parliament, and pledged the support of the English people to the cause of world peace.

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Election Facts.—While complete figures are not available as these words are being written, President Roosevelt evidently carried 46 states, leaving the Republicans only the northeastern tip of the country. No poll had indicated any such result—a result which makes Mr. Roosevelt the most popular President in the nation's history and virtually deprives the G.O.P. of influence in Washington. The most interesting single phenomenon was doubtless the plurality of 100,000 which the Democrats piled up in Connecticut, a state which endorsed Hoover in 1932. Elsewhere veteran Republican senators and congressmen went down to defeat. An exception appears to be the triumph of Henry Cabot Lodge, jr., over Governor James M. Curley in the Massachusetts Senate race. The vote in Kansas was relatively close, but Governor Landon was manifestly defeated there. Astonishing totals were piled up for Roosevelt in the great industrial states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois. In the northwest, the sole survivor of the Democratic tornado was Senator William E. Borah, who continued to hold a good lead over an aggressive opponent. One of the surprises of the campaign was Judge William F. Bleakley's showing in the race for the governorship of New York. It was estimated that he would run more than 500,000 votes ahead of his ticket. In New York and elsewhere, the Socialist ticket was almost completely ignored. The La Follettes maintained their grip on Wisconsin, and rumored opposition to the Farmer-Labor party in Minnesota did not materialize. In short, the repudiation of Governor Landon and his aides was overwhelming and decisive.

Third Parties.—The importance of third parties in the election, which had been considered great, turned out to be perhaps potential but not at all actual. Returns which gave Roosevelt 13,630,691 and Landon 8,310,248 gave Lemke only 242,440. Thus the Union party seems written off the slate rather completely. The most important development was in New York. In that state the American Labor party, formed by Labor's Non-Partizan League and the Right-wing Socialists who bolted the party in the last convention, obtained, it was indicated, more than 250,000 votes. At the head of their ticket were Roosevelt and Lehman, but the rest was their own. Fusion Mayor La Guardia is expected to run for reelection next year under the Labor party banner. The party will perhaps become the nucleus for the farmer-labor alignment which radicals have been asking for. Norman Thomas of the Socialist party was not expected to get more than 50 percent of his 1932 total of 884,781. He conducted the most strictly Marxist campaign of all the Left Wingers, declaring the people must choose between an evil Fascist type of capitalism and Socialism, and declaring that Roosevelt and Landon were basically identical because they both supported capitalism. He predicted an economic disaster as certain within five years if capitalism were retained, and campaigned bitterly against the silence of the major parties about the Constitution, which he declared had to be changed. Earl Browder and the Communists came up strongly in proportion to the Socialists, although they were apparently scoring fewer total votes. The Communist campaign was extremely non-revolutionary and democratic. Mr. Browder in his last speech spoke almost exclusively against Landon, declaring that the main issue was to keep the country from being "dragged down the bloody path of reaction, Fascism and war." He asserted the big duty is to bring into existence "that people's front which must arise nationally after this election, just as surely as the morning must follow the night."

Monsignor Burke.—Though he had been ill for many years, Monsignor John J. Burke, General Secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, died very suddenly of a heart attack on October 30. He was born in New York, on June 6, 1875, and received his education at St. Francis Xavier College and the Catholic University. The family to which he belonged was a large one. Having elected to become a Paulist, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1899. Fifteen years later he became editor of the *Catholic World,* and held that position until 1922 when the pressure of new duties made his retirement imperative. His influence upon a rising body of American Catholic writers was very great, being in large measure the result of kindly and judiciously critical letters addressed to contributors. Under his guidance the magazine sponsored in particular the work of Hilaire Belloc, then relatively unknown in the United States. The Paulist Press, as a matter of fact, issued "Europe and the Faith." When the war came, the Paulists took a leading part in organizing the care of Catholic soldiers, and Father Burke, as chairman of the National Catholic War Council, carried out a work later rewarded with a Distinguished Service Medal (1919). When the National Catholic Welfare Council (later the last word was changed to "Conference") was organized, he served as the executive secretary and had a lion's share in developing under great difficulties the varied activities of the new organization.

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But he never abandoned his literary interests. A great reader, he took occasion to translate from the French several works which had made an especial appeal to him. Duperray, Anger and Claudel owed to him part at least of their introduction to the American Catholic reading public. Father Burke's efforts to bring about a separation in the Church-State conflict in Mexico, as well as his general policy on matters of Catholic interests, are discussed editorially in this issue.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—The National Council of the Y.M.C.A., meeting at Cincinnati, approved a youth training program and a budget for home and foreign mission work. A delegation of young people outlined as objectives a more equitable distribution of jobs, business standards that were more Christian and assurance of tolerance, academic freedom and freedom of speech. The budget for foreign mission work in 1937 was set at $550,000. * * * Upon the request of Reverend Robert Armstrong of Concord, special courses in economics and sociology for ministers are to be given at the college of liberal arts of the University of New Hampshire. To date more than 100 ministers of various denominations have been invited to attend. * * * After the conviction of James Thomas, a Negro, of breaking into a house and stealing $1.50, and a sentence of life imprisonment, a number of church pastors in Birmingham, Alabama, set to work to secure a sentence of from six to ten years, which is the usual term in the state on conviction for burglary. * * * The new academic year of the Russian Orthodox Theological Seminary in Paris opened October 15 with ten new students registered. In the upper classes there are at present twenty students, and in the course of eleven years more than sixty priests have been trained at the seminary for work among the emigrés and Orthodox in lands that once belonged to the Russian Empire. * * * During a good-will tour of the South recently sponsored by the National Conference of Jews and Christians, Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein of Rochester, N. Y., Father Edward L. Stephens of Richmond, Va., and Dr. Beverly M. Boyd of Richmond made thirty-five appearances before school, college and other audiences, which numbered 90,000 in all. * * * On the Jewish Day of Atonement all synagogues in France and Algeria held memorial services for Catholic priests and religious who have been victims of religious persecution in Mexico and Spain.

Sea Strike.—The strike of the seamen has progressed with unfortunate inevitability. On November 3, 158 ships were tied up in Atlantic and Gulf ports and 150 along the Pacific Coast. The six unions affected were not, however, equally united in the different ports. In Baltimore, for instance, the longshoremen continued to work. In Philadelphia only three of the six unions were considered to be out on official strikes so that they could send pickets to the piers. In New York, Joseph Curran, head of the Seamen's Defense Committee which is handling the strike in the East and South, was opposed by David Grange, a vice-president of the International Seamen's Union. The latter claimed Curran is a Communist and is conducting a "rebel" strike and should be disavowed by the seamen. He proclaimed his intention to furnish ships with crews from his union and to arm them if necessary. He is considered by the Defense Committee a bureaucratic racketeer and betrayer of the workers. The strike is tightest on the Pacific, especially in San Francisco where the food supply is endangered. The Federal Maritime Commission reconvened to carry out its investigation, and was apparently offering a temporary compromise. The unions have four absolute demands: explicit provision for the preferential hiring of union men (control of the hiring halls); a basic eight-hour day for licensed ship's personnel stewards and chefs; cash payments instead of time off for overtime work by seagoing union men; assurance that the conditions would be retroactive as far as possible. The compromise would grant the cash for overtime but leave the hiring halls, etc., in status quo. The unions gave no public indication that they would accept the compromise, but observers seemed to think they would. The shipping companies were still trying to man their ships in the face of the strike. The reaction of the administration after its electoral victory was anticipated with interest, as it would give some indication of its future labor policy. The government could bring powerful pressure on the shipping lines which it subsidizes.

New Irish Constitution.—Reports of recent months point to a growing economic self-sufficiency in the Irish Free State. It mills its own flour, a product once purchased from Great Britain, and wheat acreage has increased threefold. The Free State is producing an exportable surplus of meat, milk, butter, eggs, poultry and cheese. The Irish Sugar Company, Limited, which has been beset by serious labor trouble recently, is able to supply practically all the country's demand from home-grown sugar beets. Home needs in shoes and clothing also formerly supplied by Britain are met by domestic factories except for women's wearing apparel. Finally, cement factories are being constructed to make the country independent of outside sources for building materials. This five-year program of economic independence chiefly as regards Great Britain is now to be supplemented politically by the adoption of a new Constitution. On November 3, Eamon de Valera, President of the Executive Council, addressed a crowded meeting of his Fianna Fail party on its general outlines. He declared it would be "the type the Irish people themselves would choose if Great Britain were a million miles away." He held, however, that it would "not injure the British people, but will bring us nearer a position in which it will be possible for both people to come together in matters of mutual interest." He regretted the continuance of the controversy over land annuities which the Irish would not pay and the English "penal tariffs" which resulted. It is said that the proposed constitution contemplates a united Ireland without a British governor general but still a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The chief magistrate will be elected in a manner similar to the American President but will be responsible to the Legislature. When the country has been organized on functional lines the new

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Senate is to be so constituted—"we do not, however, want a Fascist Senate"—the House apparently to be elected on a normal party basis.

English Telephones.—The newer books by Americans on the perennial subject of England record changes, more or less subtle, which have made living there exciting or at least different for Americans. Thus Mary Ellen Chase's "This England" (which Macmillan's are publishing at $2.50) emphasizes the perils of telephony. She describes an American going into a wayside telephone booth. "With his two coppers (if he is wise, he will carry four or six) clenched tightly in his perspiring hand, he begins nervously to study the odd mechanism before him and the directions governing its successful use. He discovers a slot for his coppers and two projecting buttons marked A and B. From the directions, which he reads carefully several times with increasing bewilderment, he ascertains that once he has lifted the receiver and heard one of two kinds of BURR, he is to drop his coppers and give his number. This is relatively easy. It is A and B who afford the difficulty. B, he reads, is not to be touched unless his call has failed to reach its destination, in the event of which a savage punch on B will, presumably, restore his coppers to him. The working of A is more erudite. He reads, 'When you hear the voice of your correspondent, and not before, press button A and speak. Unless button A is pressed, you cannot be heard.'" Miss Chase goes on to describe the gargantuan difficulties of being sure that the voice heard is "your correspondent" (not always easy, as when one is asking for the time a train leaves), and of getting the button pressed with efficiency and dispatch. The romance of telephony is, indeed, a modern marvel. Understanding a Paris operator throwing the number 468759 at you, or working out the puzzling of German dialing requirements, add greatly to the charms of travel.

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The Rearmament Race.—According to the League of Nations Armament Yearbook the rearmament of the world last year continued to increase at the rate of $1,000,000,000 a year. Total expenditures, not including Germany's, for which no figures were available, were $9,295,000,000. And there have been numerous indications that the pace is increasing. The Canadian Car and Foundry Company, the principal railway equipment company in the Dominion, is to turn to aircraft manufacture because of its belief that British and American factories are already working to capacity and are therefore unable to supply the demands of other countries. Rumors of the American aid in British rearmament are referred to elsewhere in these pages, together with budgetary difficulties France is experiencing largely because of projected armament expenditures. It was announced, October 29, that a group of wealthy Japanese and Formosan bankers had decided to contribute 150,000,000 yen to the Japanese war chest, and on the same day the Emperor reviewed the mightiest fleet ever to assemble on Asiatic waters. Soviet Russia's civilian defense association is planning a 2,000-mile gas mask relay, during the course of which trained Russian youths will check up on Soviet air defenses. The first of the "marching orders of the fifth year of Fascism" as outlined by Mussolini, November 1, was, "Peace with all, with those near and afar. Armed peace! Therefore our program of armaments for land, sea and sky will be regularly developed." King Edward's November 3 address to the British Parliament contained a plea for peace through the League, but said, "The work of strengthening my defense forces is being pressed on with the utmost energy and is now making rapid progress. My government are satisfied that the measures they are taking are essential to the defense of the empire and to the ability of the country to discharge its international obligations."

PWA Employment.—Between July, 1933, and June, 1936, the value of contracts awarded and the money paid directly to day laborers by the PWA for federal projects was $1,673,143,702 and for non-federal projects, $1,449,519,250, making a total of $3,122,662,958. The *Monthly Labor Review* shows: "Of the allotments made for federal and non-federal construction projects, $692,927,000 was accounted for by pay-roll disbursements at the site of construction. Translated into actual employment, this represents 6,475,000 man-months of labor. Apart from the direct employment created at the site of construction, orders placed for materials valued at $1,288,755,000 represent an additional 4,261,700 man-months of labor. In the aggregate . . . from July, 1933, to June, 1936, more than 10,736,700 man-months of labor were created as a result of construction financed in whole or in part by the Public Works Administration. Non-labor costs at the site and uncompleted work account for the balance of the allotments made in this period. The figures for labor other than at the site include only that labor involved in the final fabrication of the materials purchased. . . . These estimates cannot be made to show a given number of workers hired to fill a particular order, but they do reflect quite accurately the ratio of man-hours workeds on contracts occasioned by PWA construction to total man-hours worked. . . . For three industries (steel, cement and lumber) the Bureau of Labor Statistics has completed studies of the man-hours of labor other than at the site extending back to the mines or forests, factories and railroads. . . . Following a cost-accounting procedure throughout, it was estimated that approximately 2,950,000 man-months of indirect labor in mills, mines and transportation were involved in filling orders for steel in the three years ending June 30, 1936; 484,000 man-months in filling orders for cement, and 565,000 man-months in filling orders for lumber. Of this total of more than 3,999,000 man-months for steel, cement and lumber alone, only 1,872,000 man-months were in establishments engaged in the final fabrication of the materials. . . . In general, for every 1,000 man-months of labor created at the site, there are an addition 658 man-months of labor in establishments finishing the materials used. Back of the labor involved in final fabrication, in the case of steel, cement and lumber, studies of the Bureau have shown an even larger number of man-months of labor involved in transportation, in extraction, and crude processing."

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The Play and Screen

It Can't Happen Here

THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT continues to be socially minded. Its latest presentation, a dramatization of Sinclair Lewis's novel of a Fascist conquest of the United States, it believes in so thoroughly that it is sending out a number of companies to cover all portions of the country. This will undoubtedly give a number of worthy actors and actresses work, and is thus to be commanded, but it will not add to the American theatre a play of any importance, or indeed of any theatrical interest whatsoever. "It Can't Happen Here" has as a novel some merit, though it is far from Mr. Lewis's best work, but in the stage version made by the author and John C. Moffitt its merit vanishes altogether, leaving a crude cartoon, a play not of human beings but of stencilled puppets. An interesting play might have been made our of Mr. Lewis's novel, but it is evident that neither Mr. Lewis nor his collaborator are the men to do it. "It Can't Happen Here" in its stage version shows a woeful lack of dramatic skill both in its construction and its dialogue, while its characters are such as were never seen on sea or land. As for any propaganda value, this is destroyed by the utter improbability of the persons and their proceedings. To sum up, the play is unreal, undramatic, too long, and a bore.

Yet in a manner utterly unintended its production has a value; it throws searching light on the work of Sinclair Lewis, the novelist. The stage has an odd way of showing up the insufficiencies of noveltists who by the skilful use of words, by external embroidery, and by gusto of description have been able to hide the intrinsic unreality of their characters and their themes. Now Sinclair Lewis is a writer of extraordinary gusto, possessed of a keen eye and a pungent sense of humor. His is, to apply the phrase which Theodore Roosevelt once applied to himself, "a commonplace mind highly energized." Through his extraordinary ability to throw the commonplace into highlights he has forced himself into the rôle of a minor prophet, despite the fact that his characters are often merely galvinized mannikins. To such a writer the stage is pitiless. In certain of his books, notably in "Dodsworth," his characters have a life of their own, and under the skilful hand of Sidney Howard this life is transferred to the stage. But the characters of "It Can't Happen Here," with the single exception of Doremus Jessup, have no such reality, and brought to the stage in all their crudity the result is lamentable. It is then as a criticism of the work of Lewis, the novelist, that the stage presentation of "It Can't Happen Here" has its only real importance. (At the Adelphi Theatre.)

Sweet River

GEORGE ABBOTT'S adaptation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is a poetically conceived, delicately written, sensitively directed version of a play which in all of its previous avatars has been a mixture of melodrama and sentimental hokum. Mr. Abbott has removed the hokum and some of the melodrama, and has shown what an honest and poetic mind can make of the old drama. "Sweet River" is at once moving and veritable, no longer a crude play of propaganda, but a drama which is real and informed with spirituality. Little Eva does not die and she does not ascend to heaven, but the rest of the play is there, purged of its dross. That it did not succeed is a sad commentary on the taste of the New York public. It was beautifully acted by white and Negro artists, and with scenery by Donald Oenslager which was delightful. The Uncle Tom of Walter Price, the Eliza of Margaret Mullen, the Phineas of Charles Dingle, the St. Clare of Bartlett Robinson, and the Topsy of Inge Hardison were all joys unadulterated. New York met a fine play and never knew it. (At the Fifty-first Street Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

THE MOTION PICTURE volleys and thunders spectacularly to honor the charge made by those gallant 600 lancers who so impressed Alfred Lord Tennyson in the writing of his noble verses which are ever green in mortal memory. The Tennyson poem now relives to inspire a thundering thrill, a magnificent panorama of surging action that sweeps with almost breath-taking motion to the tragic attack of the English cavalry on the Russians in the Crimea. It is with a stark realism such as the motion picture camera has rarely ever before captured that the Light Brigade rides again into the "valley of death, into the mouth of hell," to avenge the brutal massacre of women and children in a British outpost in India. The reenactment of the famous charge starts with a strong flavor of pre-destiny, as the slow beat of the horses' hoofs increases, first slowly, but always in unison with the musical accompaniment, into a final burst of roaring fury.

The original incident of the Crimean War's most dire tragedy has, of course, been fictionized, but the historical facts and the fiction are blended so persuasively that not once is there a distraction from the resultant events. The British garrison of 1850, a great army post; the headquarters of the Russian army at Balaclava; the sweeping battlefield across which the famous Brigade charged; a vast jungle and a leopard hunt; Arab camps and war concentrations stand among a score of enormous sets at the foot of snow-crested ranges strongly remindful of the lofty Himalayas—all indicative of the grand scale of production.

The motivation concerns two Englishmen, brothers and soldiers, in love with the same girl, and of a border chieftain who, first betraying the British, fled to the Crimea, joined the Russian forces and caused to be issued the British order which sent "the noble six hundred" charging into death and glory. It is colorful, rich in action, backgrounded and animated at once by romance and martial conflict, yet the love scenes are keyed in contrasting simplicity to the military spectacles.

Warner Brothers may well be proud of Michael Curtiz's direction. Too, the photography and musical scoring are as thoroughly a dramatic part of the production as the excellent work of virtually all of the players.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

THE MAIN ISSUE

Newark, N. J.

TO the Editor: Your editorial in the October issue, entitled "The Main Issue," may have been a "sincere striving to be non-partizan in politics," but its quotation from Mark Sullivan, whom you properly style a "stanch anti-New Deal propagandist," together with your comment on the Sullivan quotation, made a rather top-heavy editorial recitation of the alleged "revolutionary" social changes that are being conjured up against President Roosevelt. And, incidentally, Landon the unknown is left unknown as far as any quotations or comment by you about him are concerned.

Did it ever occur to you, Mr. Editor, that the encyclicals, "Rerum Novarum" and "Quadragesimo Anno," purview vastly more revolutionary social and economic changes than anything the New Deal has thus far enacted or proposed?

Isn't it true that the measures offered by the New Deal under the leadership of Roosevelt to curb unbridled competition, to give the workingman a decent wage, to provide social security, to regulate holding companies, to protect the stock-investing public, to protect the deposits of people in banks, and others which I will not further intrude on your space to enumerate, isn't it true I ask that these measures are, many of them, in substantial accord with our Holy Father's scheme of social reconstruction? Didn't Pius XI say that the consequences of an individualistic spirit in economic affairs are that "free competition is dead, economic dictatorship has taken its place . . . the whole economic life has become hard, cruel and relentless in a ghastly measure"?

And surely, Mr. Editor, you must have read the speech of Reverend John A. Ryan, D.D., professor of political economy at Catholic University, delivered at the Sixth National Convention of the National Catholic Alumni Federation, in July, 1933, in which he said, "The thing that is foremost in the minds of all of us who have given any attention to the general topic for discussion this evening is the parallel between the proposals of the Holy Father regarding social reconstruction and the main elements of the Industrial Recovery Act. . . . I want to bring before you the idea of the correspondence between this, a new law, and the Holy Father's encyclical."

Again you must have read the reply of Father Ignatius Cox, S. J., to the anti-New Deal speech of a Mr. Desvernine, a New York lawyer, at the Decennial Convention of the National Catholic Alumni Federation in Chicago, in April, 1935. In that reply Father Cox said, "What we need today is to protect the majority from organized and predatory wealth. . . . Big corporations, manufacturers associations, retail associations, organized and predatory wealth have chosen the best talent and brains which they could buy in this country to protect their rights of property, and many of those so-called rights to property are gotten by the exploitation of the masses. . . . I prophesy that if we do not reconstruct society along the lines of reconstruction which is suggested by Pius XI there will be nothing left of the American Constitution, because no matter what it is, it has in practise protected acquired rights of property against the human right to live. What is the use of liberty if you can't live?"

I am beginning to think, as I observe the Catholic wealthy lining up against Roosevelt with their cat's-paw political spokesman, that "economic royalists" in the Church in America will do her ultimately the same harm that "governmental royalists," clerical and lay, did in the not so long ago to her eldest daughter, France.

It's all right to be politically non-partizan, Mr. Editor. But why editorialize in quotation and comment the shallow journalistic views of Mr. Sullivan, a paid propagandist, to the exclusion of the reasoned opinion of America's foremost Catholic economist, the erudite cultured Father Ryan, and to the exclusion of the views of that clear-thinking, plain-speaking, erudite and cultured professor of Fordham University, Father Ignatius Cox, S.J.?

I would consider it in keeping with COMMONWEAL'S usual fairness if you would print this letter.

JOHN A. MATTHEWS.

A WAR UPON GOD

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: "The laboring population of the Soviet Union," Mr. Stalin tells us, "is fulfilling its duty and struggling for the population of Spain. It understands fully that the freedom and liberation of Spain are not a private cause but a concern for the progressive humanity of the whole world." If anyone is in doubt as to what is loose in Europe, all he has to do is to give to the above words their full meaning and match them with the actions of the Soviet government, for this time Soviet words and deeds do match.

The conflict that has opened with Spain as its first battleground is no mere battle of political forms or economic systems. Men are not fighting as they are fighting in Spain for such things. Something infinitely more important is at stake than these. Does anyone suppose that Soviet Russia or the Russian Communist party is prepared to set Europe on fire even for the dictatorship of the proletariat? Is it not clear that it is a battle of metaphysics, a battle of ideas and a battle of the most fundamental of all metaphysical—that is, spiritual—ideas, a war of religion, a war, in fact, and that for the first time in human history, upon religion as such, upon the Almighty Himself?

To anyone not purblind, it has been plain from the first moment of the conflict in Spain that it was that which gave the fight its appallingly savage character. And it is that which has roused the Soviets in Russia to the action which their diplomats have taken, an action unparalleled so far, for the manifestly passionate purpose that it discloses. Compare it with the smooth hypocrisies of these gentlemen at Geneva (and for that matter at Washington) and there is a world of difference. And Stalin tells us in plain language what that difference means.

The most devastating war that ever occurred in Europe between European peoples since the Middle Ages was the

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Thirty Years War which was waged with a ferocity up to that time unsurpassed, and the reason was that it was a religious war, a war of religions. Half the population of the Germanies perished, the middle class was decimated and on the ashes and the wreck was founded what later became the Hohenzollern absolutism. The conflict brewing in Europe today threatens to let loose the ultimate fanaticism of which men are capable, a fanaticism that knows no compromise, that no treaties of peace can still, that knows no frontiers of land or race and can tear races and nations apart in a war of virtual extermination.

This writer is well aware that to the reader this must sound like a gross exaggeration. Yet what other interpretation of the facts is really possible? There is, of course, too, a conflict of political ideas and of economic theories, to say nothing of the antagonisms remaining from the Great War. That these are accidental, however, is clear from the nature of the struggle itself in Spain, the entry of Soviet Russia into the situation and the consequences of that entry, among which the action of Belgium is peculiarly significant. So, too, is the obvious mystification of Great Britain in the face of the cleavage of opinion at home—a cleavage of instincts among the least metaphysically minded people in Europe, but one on precisely the same lines as that in France, where the alignment of philosophies and emotions exactly parallels that in Spain. Moreover, whatever happens in Spain, whichever side wins the military victory, France, sooner or later, must fight out the same battle.

Nor is it difficult to see in this war of *weltanschauungen* the logical culmination of a long historical process. Its roots are plainly visible, at least three hundred years back when the Thirty Years War had burned itself out, and modern Europe had taken shape. But that is small comfort for us who live today and confront a danger to Europe and to civilization greater than any either has faced since Europe became the Europe which we know and to which we are materially and spiritually so closely united.

THOMAS F. WOODLOCK.

MISSOURIAN ARCADY

Ste. Genevieve, Mo.

TO the Editor: I do not like to disturb the idyllic picture of our old town which was drawn in the article, "Missourian Arcady," in your issue of October 2. Still I am sorry that Marion Grubb has not seen "Sainte Genevieve: The Story of Missouri's Oldest Settlement," by the Reverend Francis J. Yealy, S.J. This "jewel of a little book of Americana" was reviewed in your issue of September 13, 1935, and can be obtained from the Bicentennial Historical Committee here in Ste. Genevieve for $1.60 post paid.

Father Yealy is a native son, who has had the advantage of an acquaintance of more than forty years with Ste. Genevieve. We present-day inhabitants believe that he has given an accurate account of its atmosphere and especially of Catholic life throughout its history. As he remarks in his opening chapter, "Many a tourist has come here in recent years, his mind filled with romantic ideas gathered from fanciful articles in newspapers and magazines. He has perhaps half expected to find a sort of Old World village, with its simple childlike inhabitants moving about the streets in colorful peasant garb or working at primitive handicrafts. The reality is not quite so poetic, and the visitor who has come with such prepossessions has naturally gone away disappointed. He encounters, in fact, a curious mixture of the modern and the antique."

Unfortunately for lovers of the picturesque, "blue-kerchiefed peasant women" are never seen at the convent gate. I, myself, have lived here for fifteen years without seeing any, nor has Father Yealy, so he tells me, since the last Negro mammy laid aside her bandanna a third of a century ago. Like many a priest in larger American cities, Father, now Monsignor, Van Tourenhout does sometimes wear his cassock when crossing the street to the convent or parochial school. But it is not quite correct to say that he follows the French custom "of wearing his soutane and biretta on the streets of the town."

Our church records, I understand, are really the oldest in the state, but the earliest of them is dated 1759, not 1734, and they say nothing of a mission at Old Mines even at this later date. The "parish of St. Joachim," the present title of the one at Old Mines is mentioned in the earlier records, but it has been clearly shown that this was the original title of the parish of Ste. Genevieve.

We believe in the charms of our little town and are pleased to have them admired, but we like to have them described as they are. I do not want to cast aspersions on Mr. Dorrance's attractive and valuable study. But Father Yealy's more intimate familiarity with his subject has made his account a good deal truer to life. His book is not a mere flippant piece of "debunked" history nor a lifeless and tiresome exhibition of pedantry. He has been congratulated by reviewers for the human interest and the literary ability of his work. We hope that many of your readers will join us in enjoying it.

KATHLEEN ROZIER.

CATHOLIC NOVELS AND CRITICS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: The letter headed "Catholic Novels and Critics" in your issue of October 9 states in a manner that is not altogether clear one attitude toward the very complex problem of the relation of religion to literature. Since this matter is puzzling as well as truly significant, may I ask the writer and those who hold her opinions an earnest question or two?

Do those who define a Catholic novel as one "in which Catholic principles and the Catholic philosophy of life are presented and exemplified" mean that a Catholic novel should tell only of good people doing good acts? Can the Catholic philosophy of life be presented and exemplified effectively without depicting temptation and struggle with sin? Does the writer maintain that the novels she mentions approvingly really do present Catholicism more convincingly than the novels of Maurice Baring or, to mention a much debated writer, Sigrid Undset?

RUTH BYRNS.

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Books

The Tragic Empress

Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, by Count Caesar Egon Corti; translated by Elizabeth Catherine Alison Phillips. Stanford University: Stanford Leland University Press. $3.50.

ELIZABETH OF BAVARIA had been brought up quite simply, in an atmosphere of homeliness which later made it difficult for her to bend to the exigencies of Spanish etiquette which ruled the Austrian court. She was the constant companion of her father, the eccentric Duke Maximilian, and like him she was a dreamer, living in a world of her own, far from the miseries of earth; she loved nature, flowers, animals; and wrote beautiful poetry in which she expressed the longings of her heart for all she did not find in life. A woman of intelligence, with an ardent soul, and an innocent mind, built on pure and beautiful lines, she was destined to suffer and to grieve deeply.

She was still a child when Francis-Joseph, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, a young man of twenty-three, came to seek the hand of her eldest sister, Helene, in compliance with the wishes of his mother, the despotic old Archduchess Sophy. But he fell passionately in love with Elizabeth and Count Corti tells us the story of his courtship in a most interesting manner. Francis-Joseph was entranced by her beauty and she could not refuse the imperial crown, but she knew nothing of love and marriage, nor of the existence which awaited her in that dark Hofburg of Vienna. Her mother-in-law's imperious character, and the violent passion of a husband whose amorous nature only inspired her with disgust, brought Elizabeth, Empress of Austria, many unhappy hours.

Count Corti describes extremely well the difficulties of those first years, how her first dislike of her consort was finally transformed into a warm affection and what led the Empress to interest herself in politics, and especially in the Hungarian question. She had a fine sense of the necessities of the moment, and understood that since the war against France in 1859 it was only Hungary and the Hungarian people who could save the discredited Hapsburg dynasty from complete disaster. Her greatest misfortune was the sinister influence of the Archduchess Sophy, not only on the Emperor, but on a certain section of Austrian aristocracy who saw only an intruder in the consort of its sovereign. Her most bitter sorrow was the separation from her two eldest children whom her mother-in-law took under her complete care, without inquiring whether this arrangement suited their mother or not. The Empress never forgave the Archduchess for this, and when her youngest daughter, the Archduchess Valérie, came into the world, she refused to let the child out of her sight for one single moment, defying Sophy to interfere with her. Count Corti completely clears the Empress of the accusation that she had borne an illegitimate child.

Reading this book, and especially the chapter in which the terrible end of the Empress's only son, the Archduke Rudolph, is related, one can only feel a profound sym-

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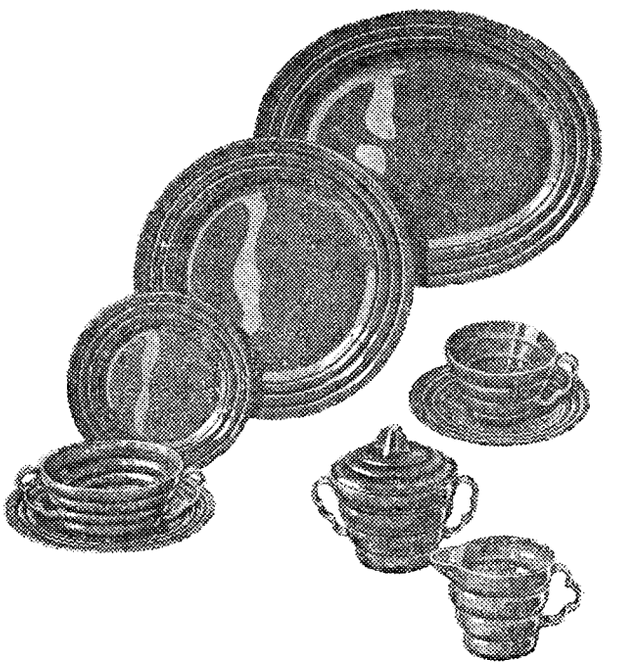

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pathy for a woman whom the world considered one of the luckiest in the world, but who was really one of the unhappiest. Almost from the first hour of her marriage, she climbed a Calvary of which she reached the summit on the day when the knife of the anarchist Luccheni sent her into eternity. Embittered by lack of sympathy, she clung with pertinacity to the friendship of the few persons who realized her martyrdom, such as Count Andrassy, Countess Mary Festetics, and a few others, and these loved her devotedly.

The entire book is fascinating and has considerable political value, describing as it does the inner condition of Austria as well as of Hungary during the first forty years of Francis-Joseph I's reign. It does not explain the wrong policy which caused Austria to rush headlong into the World War, but describes pretty accurately the events which led to this war, and from this point of view it will prove invaluable to the student of Austrian history. It is altogether a work which can be most warmly recommended, and which ought to have considerable success.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

An Urbane Review

Catholicism in England, 1535-1935, by David Mathew. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $3.50.

"THIS book," the author says, "is intended as a sketch of the contribution of Catholics to English life, a brief impression of the influence of individuals and Catholic groups upon the history of England." It is a wonderfully vivid sketch executed with great mastery and economy of materials. To tell in small compass the story of four centuries of English Catholicism, assessing it in relation to English history as a whole, the author must select, condense, generalize. He has done so with fine judgment and, while imparting interest and vitality to his narrative by the happy choice of detail drawn from ultimate sources, he has not missed the essential.

It is quite possible that specialist historians may make occasional exception to his generalizations or that proud Catholics with a heritage of unbroken tradition may condemn him as irreverent. Yet we commend him as an excellent guide to those hitherto unacquainted with the past four centuries of English Catholicism; while to those generally familiar with it he will give joy immeasurable.

It is indeed "a brief impression," as he calls it; but it is the impression of a critical student endowed with an objectivity of vision not characteristically English. He has a wonderful facility in condensed statement and a piquancy of wit that obviates dulness. This piquancy is due to no "wise-cracking" spirit which in a historian would be detestable, but to the serious purpose of presenting his story with effective clarity. He has in a high degree the faculty of expression as Newman understood it.

It would be too long to detail the contents of the book. Mr. Shane Leslie has already summarized it in sixteen pages of the *Dublin Review* (July). While mainly concerned with the Catholic group as such, portraits of leaders abound. Some of these I would love to present. They have a sparkling quality. Milner, for example,

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seems ready to walk out of the frame alive and—bouncing mad. It would not be fair to excise striking features detached from the full-length portrait and for this THE COMMONWEAL would not have room. Seek it at page 149.

The work as a whole I heartily commend and congratulate its author on his great success. There is nothing else quite like it or so satisfactory on the history of English Catholicism since the Reformation.

PATRICK J. BARRY.

The Devil Not a Devil

Voltaire, by Alfred Noyes. New York: Sheed and Ward. $3.50.

MR. NOYES has certainly rushed in. Contending that Voltaire was neither the radical unbeliever dear to the hearts of modern liberal scribes nor the libertine of orthodox tradition, he contends that his hero—for the sage of Ferney has become nothing less than that—was a deeply religious thinker disgusted by the degradation of ecclesiastical life in his time. Much is made of Voltaire's dictum: "The fact that I wish to destroy the rats in my house does not mean that I do not believe it had an Architect." Mr. Noyes even contends that Voltaire's seemingly heretical utterances were not directed so much against dogmas as against the fallacious and ineffectual reasoning in behalf of dogmas which was prevalent in his age. Supporting these claims with biographical data, he maintains that Voltaire was not a libertine at all but rather a kind of ascetic, and that he would have died reconciled to the Church had it not been for the stupidity of a certain Parisian cleric.

Not all these startling assertions are as new to the world of scholarship as most of us might suppose. It has long been realized that the Voltaire of the "Letters" is quite a different person from the poisonous "crooked devil" of popular legend. As a matter of fact, that correspondence justifies placing its author amongst the great traditionalistic French moralists and not merely amongst the French masters of prose writing. Less secure is Mr. Noyes's interpretation of the Voltairean life. For though he has an easy time refuting some of the nonsense written by lazy and mendacious scribes, he by no means convinces one that his own coat of whitewash covers all the facts. A certain propagandistic vehemence enables him to detect a "vein of chivalry" but to miss the strain of supercilious unfairness and intellectual pride which is surely quite as evident in Voltaire.

The best portions of the volume are those which brush aside the cobwebs of conventional literary criticism. Mr. Noyes's comments on Voltaire's poetry and drama are incisive, convincing and well buttressed. One is convinced anew that the average pedagog of literary history is a blithering and blinking ass, who remasticates what his blithering and blinking forebears have said. From this point of view the book merits a blue ribbon. But it is too insecure in its philosophical assumptions and too bent on swallowing its thesis, hook, line and sinker, to be anything like a definitive portrait of Voltaire.

PAUL CROWLEY.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF G. K. CHESTERTON

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The Testimony of Saint Joan

Joan of Arc, a Self Portrait; compiled and translated from original sources by Willard Trask. New York: Stackpole Sons. $2.00.

BIOGRAPHERS who supply a wealth of personal letters and other records of actual words often convey a sense of reality far beyond their own interpretative powers. When the subject is a literary artist of the caliber of Cardinal Newman a biography like Wilfrid Ward's all but makes the hero a lifelong personal friend. Saint Joan was no conscious literary artist, but the phrases which Willard Trask has so skilfully compiled and arranged into an autobiographical sketch carry a simple straightforwardness and conviction that leaves the most vivid impressions of admiration and attraction. Joan spoke as one ever conscious of a great mission and no amount of opposition or discouragement could shake her belief in the constant guidance of Saint Michael, Saint Catherine and Saint Margaret.

The excerpts from her trial at Rouen in 1431 and from the quotations of witnesses at the rehabilitation proceedings thirty years later, present Saint Joan as a very human figure. Outstanding were her faith, humility and devotion to the Mass and the sacraments. She shrank from imprisonment and pain but in the end accepted both with Christian resignation. She would have preferred to remain at her "poor mother's" side or tending sheep on the hillsides of Domrémy but her voices commanded her to undertake the salvation of France. She said, "I have never killed a man," and in battle bore a banner rather than a lance. She sought to dissuade her enemies from offering resistance and ordered her troops not to pursue them when defeated. And despite her lack of education Joan was often able by her own shrewd common sense and supernatural help to outwit those who opposed her. Her greatest source of unhappiness was the unwillingness of people to believe her; her greatest solace was prayer.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

Trumpets Sounding

John Dawn, by Robert P. Tristram Coffin. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THIS book is the story of what happened to a Maine seacoast family through the course of four generations. Great-grandfather was a shipbuilder, slain by the Indians. Grandfather built ships, too, and was a privateer on the side. Father builds bigger and better ships, and sails around the world. The sons have a soft spot in them somewhere, and die violently on land.

So far, of course, it sounds like a novel. But Mr. Coffin has chosen to write about these things in the spirit of Parson Weems on the subject of George Washington. The names of his heroes cannot be mentioned except to the sound of trumpets. They may do wrong, but they cannot do anything unheroically. They cannot walk or talk like the rest of us because they are always striding or roaring with big voices, and they cannot even breathe without "flaring" their nostrils while they gulp in the morning, or sometimes the New Year, but usually the

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celebrated Atlantic air. They have very marvelous personal qualities. Their eyes have "the shine of cut diamonds." They are exceedingly handsome, tremendously muscular. They have "iron" in them, and they can work all hours, or as Mr. Coffin says of one of them, "until the evening stars were tangled into his hair."

None of this, of course, would ordinarily lose this reviewer any sleep. But when an old hand like Mr. Coffin writes a book like this, you are bound to wonder what on earth he thought he was trying to do. The uncritical attitude, you think, may be deliberate. If so, it would fit in with other things which seem to indicate an ambition to write something in the nature of "epic." Much is made, for instance, about a pewter mug, handed down from father to son, and known as "the luck of the Dawns." Then there are references now and again to "the curse of the Dawns." Finally there is a ghost ship which bobs up at unexpected times, and always send the current Dawn below for five fingers of brandy. The publishers call this symbolism. Other people will have other words for it.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Human Kindness

Selected Poems, by T. A. Daly. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

WHO, EDUCATED in American schools, can be unfamiliar with the poems of T. A. Daly? From coast to coast they have been recited in elocution classes of the last two generations and much of his work, originally published in newspapers, particularly the *Catholic Standard* and *Times* of Philadelphia, have found their way into numerous anthologies. Here then is a collection in one volume not only of the best poem from "McAroni Ballads," "Canzoni," "Carmina" and other published volumes, but those in a more lofty lyric vein than his more famous dialect ones. That Mr. Daly is one of the most loved of American poets is obvious; that he has an extraordinary abundance of talent which is less realized than indicated, needs more elucidation.

Christopher Morley has suggested that "a great short-story writer may have been lost to the world when Tom Daly, adept in character suggestion, master of plot and narrative, gave his prime gusto to the arts of verse." This may be—indeed such poems as "Miss Carlotta," "The Blossomy Barrow," "Tony Maratt" (to cite only a few) demonstrate his theory to be a fact. But it can be questioned, after reading "The Queen's Fleets," "To a Thrush" and "Grace for the Ship," that the world may also have lost a great poetic genius when Mr. Daly set his course. However, Mr. Daly is so perfect an exponent in his own field that there is a certain ingratitude in imagining what he might have become in others. His celebration of the new American, his genial welcome of the immigrant and understanding of those touches of humor and pathos, hope and fear, and the innate finenesses of the individual, have given renewed emphasis to the basic brotherhood of man. Surely there can be no greater achievement to anyone's credit.

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Good Reading

The American Language, by H. L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $5.00.

FOR INTEREST, guidance and your money's worth, consult the fourth edition of Mr. Mencken's *magnum opus*. It has justly been rated as a good book even by persons astounded by the fact that its author is its author. We append just a word to the chorus of praise, having been mightily entertained as well as fortified in our patriotism. To be sure, one entertains some doubt even at the end of these 325,000 words of text, and wonders exactly what the American language is. But obviously we have to with no mere addendum to the King's English. The graft is changing the tree, and all one can do is watch the change. Few will have realized how much linguistics can do for history until they have read Mr. Mencken's book. This is big enough to look like a WPA project, but it certainly doesn't read like one.

Sometimes Glorious

Collected Poems of Ford Madox Ford. New York: Oxford University Press. $3.00.

YEARS ago, when Mr. Ford's "On Heaven" first appeared, the present reviewer and a priest-poet friend agreed that it was a fine and not unspiritual poem. For whereas so many meditations on the future life completely ignore the body, this scribe has predicted its happy immortality in most delectable words. Of all this one is less certain today. But "On Heaven" is none the less still a very colorful, very interesting poem, and there is much else in the present collection that, read under proper conditions, might be very beguiling. Mr. Ford is, as always, exasperating. Sometimes he is a plain bore. And then suddenly he becomes the most brilliant living conversationalist in print. This book should be read with an accompaniment of old port. It will not spoil the bouquet.

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